



SHOWING SOME LEG IN WINNIPEG:
INSIDE MICHAËLLE JEAN'S FIRST WEEK

BILL SAMPSON'S UNTOLD
PRISON NIGHTMARE

MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | www.macleans.ca

OCTOBER 31 2005

THE AGE OF THE WUSS

The sad slump of North
American manhood

EXHIBIT A The limp life
of Canadian Tire Guy

Why men fear funny women

And a tentative defence
of hazing rituals

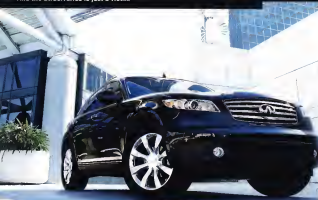


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"Sending raw sewage directly into the Pacific! Even my three-year-old twins know how important it is for waste to go to a sewage treatment plant." —*Barbara Perisich, San Diego, Cal.*

What lies beneath

Some of the people you interviewed for your article on Canadian cities pumping raw sewage into oceans and rivers appear to attach more importance to the next fiscal year than they do to the well-being of the world around us ("From sea to stinking sea," *Cover, Oct. 17*). This is an appealingly short-sighted approach. We have a responsibility to those who follow us to leave this world the way we found it, except where we act to reverse the damage done by others. If you dump organic garbage into a pond, its ecosystem eventually degrades on the point of collapse. The only difference with the oceans is that their collapse will not occur during any fiscal year in my life. We cannot continue to treat the oceans as a vast, unlimited resource on one hand and the sink for the planet on the other. Stop making a stink, Mr. Florio!

John McKelvie, Ontario

It's ironic that Mr. Florio's crass hammer is probably the most powerful argument that the pro-sewage treatment side can muster, because their opponents are nothing more than bulls for those businesses, unions and consultants who expect to reap a fortune if Victoria is forced into a useless sewage treatment monstrosity.

John Perkowski, Victoria

Victoria's critics shouldn't be embarrassed that they are dumping raw sewage into the Juan de Fuca Strait. They are just hiding behind scientific studies that present the story they want to hear. The fact is the citizens of Victoria do not want to pay for a sewage treatment plant and willingly fund conservatives to support that position. Here in Calgary my children happily play in the Bow River on a hot summer day. I would not allow them to play in the waters off Victoria. But the Bow is dead. "Fossil coliform count" is a term that should mean foreign to my family as long as we live in Calgary. Use that, Calgary.

It's time to cut the contramasthead crap about Victoria's sewage and look at the so-



critical fact. Numerous studies have been done over a number of years and scientists have consistently told us the odd currents in Juan de Fuca Strait are a natural and environmentally safe way to deal with effluent, and treatment plants are unnecessary.

Rocke Goodfellow, Victoria

Most Victorians want sewage treatment, but it always gets sidetracked politically. Many of us may end up voting for Mr. Florio. Consider also the wastes of that garbage on our beaches. For years the Canadian navy has thrown garbage overboard. So have our farms, mining, cruise ships, foreign fishing vessels, oil tankers, and our local fishers. We have become the world's garbage dump. And people wonder why whales throw their calves on beaches to get out of the mess they live in.

Diane Hill, Victoria

Diaper-free at last!

I grew up in the backwoods of Manitoba where christianism communication and respectful parenting was a given, so your article on diapering caught my interest. "Go-go-gotta go!" *Life, Oct. 17*. Actually EC is not a new idea. Our Canadian parents pressed the style of toilet training. Often they had three or four children under the age of five, no synthetic washers or dryers, and a

limited supply of diapers, so they were pressed to have their babies diaper free as soon as they could. Back then, early training was a sign of good parenting. Their mothers went off to work, leaving their infants with an easy supply of disposable diapers and, after two or three generations, the idea of EC faded. Now, unfortunately, there are a few good babies and simply rediscovered the joys of having clean, dry children. *Ekkeid*

Ann Grier, Coquitlam, B.C.

No birdbrains here

Yes, crows are smarter than we think ("Birds of a feather," *Books, Oct. 17*). Your example of them getting driven in Japan to crack walnuts then by placing the nuts in front of their curious inquisitive, although dangerous. An Australian told me another story of crow behavior that is even more dangerous. To combat sugar cane beetles, Australia introduced poisonous cane toads from South America. The toads, not having any natural predators, multiplied rapidly. Crows died when they tried to eat the toads, at least initially. However, it didn't take long before they learned to turn over the toads, kill them, and eat their bellies without ill effects.

Fred Veager, Vancouver

Close quarters

Steve MacIsaac's article in the new poll by Grattan's SBS Research and the University at Buffalo says Canadians think a little Americans ("Closer than you think," *Canada U.S. Relations, Oct. 17*). But it could not help but reflect on how easy it is to read too much into the answers given to a multiple choice questionnaire. Furthermore, one will often have the tendency to draw conclusions that will fit his/her own way of thinking. What does the designation "somewhat closer" mean?

What is implied by the question, "Should the United States and Canada be moving to even greater and closer co-operation on border security?" I will move toward greater co-operation with my neighbors in sharing the cost of renewing snow. Yet my values will remain very different from theirs.

Maxine Pennington, Moncton, Ont.

Isn't it true that surveys, as a research tool, are only as valuable as the answers are honest? Who would say aloud that any country anywhere in the world would co-operate fully? Here in what the survey really shows, generally speaking, Canadians

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THE ADRENALINE OF A NEW WORLD

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and Americans value co-operation. It's sort of like saying we love our mother, or we're breathing—it's not really news, and it doesn't really mean a whole lot. For example, "wanting closer co-operation" doesn't mean that we define national security, border security, anti-terrorism or energy policy in the same way that we would take similar approaches to pursuing any of those problems, even if we could agree on the goal. The border is there for a reason. Of course we have common interests, but they're not identical, and they're not supported to be.

Maclean's, Toronto, Ont.

We are not close enough. For national security, economic development and a progressive economy, Canada and the U.S. must form a tighter bond. North American perimeter security will open our borders, enhancing free trade. Signing to the U.S. missile defense program will create Canadian jobs as well as R & D. The economy in both countries relies on free trade of goods and services including energy. Canadian exports for export credit programs and must maintain or increase that in balance to maintain a solid economy. In the simplest of terms, if a thirty-quadrant more than it earns, it will fail financially. This holds true of a country as well.

“So Canada and the U.S. value co-operation? That's like saying we love our mothers; it's not news.”

The wisdom of the absurd

Thank you for the excellent column by three of my favourite writers. Barbara Aronow could do better and tip-toe's barfing (“Step away from the rag,” Oct. 17). Paul Wells on the PM and “shrinking to nowhere” leading to “a controversially subtle Northern Passage” (“Much ado about nothing,” Oct. 17), and Scott Fitch on the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine concluding that the film business is up to par (“Hollywood's dirty habits,” Oct. 17). I'm still laughing over the bit about mink walking while driving. Wells' observations, “So we're against global warming, but we suspect it might come to hand,” and his researchers being “up to

their elbows in potests,” “Inflated” Aronow, Wells and Fitch are providing great material for a book on the wisdom of the absurd. Ailsa Black, Toronto

I have never been a fan of Barbara Aronow. I find her to be overly self-serving and cruel. This week, however, I cannot sit by and not comment on her column about bad drivers. How dare she generalize about the driving skills of complete noobs, seniors and ages. I do not fit any other categories but I am still outraged. Why in the world do you continue to print her column when it is clear she cares nothing about the readers, your readers, whom she routinely offends?

Michelle Matthews, Angus, Ont.

The dark side of gender-testing

I agree with your writer that the in-home gender-testing kit, Baby Gender Monitor, while satisfying a mother's curiosity, has a dark side (“Pace of sex selection,” Health, Oct. 3). Sex selection is one more reason to justify abortion on demand. Abortion because of sex selection is discrimination against an unborn human life. This disrespect encourages the frivolous misuse of the gift of procreation. It is irresponsible for a company to reap financial gain from a product that has so much potential for abuse.

Alex Richard, Ottawa, Ont.

Flying right

As a travel agent making your story about Wm. Jet CEO Chas. Reddick (“Pulling Winger out of the blue,” The Maclean's Interview, Oct. 3), my only comment is, “Way to go, Chas.” Winger has continued to support us in a tangible way. While our other large airline in Canada has cut our commissions entirely, Winger has not only continued to pay us for putting him on our lists but has increased that commission recently. That's a good deal for the consumer as well, because I don't have to charge my clients as much when I book Winger. Really terrific. Cathy Tarkenton

There is much discontent at Winger. First officers take home \$904 every two weeks. And they are based in Calgary so they are living at the YMCA. Happy at Winger? No. Reddick may be laughing along with the top employees, but the ones at the bottom of the pyramid certainly are not. Robert A. Ferguson, Markham, Ont.

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ScoreCard



Colleen Hensley, curator of Nunavut's museums, flowed cleverly from territorial's assembly chamber. Some moisture spread by political debate may stop artwork from cracking. Tuck also makes subtle political point: time to budget for a museum fund-drive.



HARMONY
Mozzafar's sympathy softens contract. Musicians get raise but lose paid over time for lengthy out-of-towns. Musaf lovers applied labour peace. And applied And applied!



INGOMNIA
Study finds we sleep on "flea soup" of fungi, dust mites and their excrement. Synthetic pillows worse than feathers, but all types support a learning curve. megapopolis: Did we really need to know this? No wonder many scientists sleep alone; well, except for their pillows.



SINGH OFF KEY
Compliment of excessively liberal scientist
Simon Singh roasters
Karl Popper to
re-embed priests in
his hot Nine Million
Bicycles to reflect
his contention that
edge of universe not
12 billion light years
away—ITS 11.7 billion.
Mind will be blown
Tony Bennett didn't
really leave heart in
San Francisco.



Crime | Sex, drugs, and two California murders

WV spent the week in the estate of a semi-anonymous mad, defending a woman charged with killing her wealthy third husband for his money. Then, on Saturday, Oct. 16, Sawyer and frequent TV legal panelist Doreen Harowitz arrived home in a bloody hurry after all his own. His wife, Pamela Yonke, 52, lay dead in the trailer where the couple lived while their dream home in Lafayette, Calif., was being built. She'd been beaten to death—bludgeoned, reportedly, 59 times with a piece of ironing-board and left with a gash: cross carved into her back. Last week, police noted his 16-year-old Son David, who lived nearby, and changed him with Vin's real name. According to reports, they'd described by classmates as a path runner with an interest in Sizzlers, had killed the woman after a night to her home in search of marijuana.



Harowitz left, top, Watake, and the dream house they're in the process of building

grow-up equipment he'd ordered through credit card fraud, and mistakenly thought had been delivered there.

A matter was declared in the court case. However, 38, was involved in. The presiding judge said sympathy for the lawyer, who'd also made media commentary during the Melind Jackson and Scott Peterson trials, might cloud the jury's attitude toward his client, Susan Polk, 47. She is charged with stabbing her 70-year-old husband, Frank, to death three years ago while they were in the middle of a bitter divorce. Polk had been a 15-year-old partner of his future husband when the couple first began having sex. She is being sued by two of their three sons.

Quote of the week | 'I'm entitled to my entitlements.'

DAVID ORNDORFF, 47, says he may still expect a sentence package, even after feeling "somewhat compelled" to resign as president of the Inland Canadian Mink in Sept. 20 amid hoards of protest over his two scoundrel bullets.



Spa owner Peter James Chang doesn't separate business and pleasure.

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[illegible]

SYRIA The country's traditionally divided opposition united in a call for change in the oppressive Middle Eastern country. An open letter toward President Bashar al-Assad has been growing, as has outside pressure after the February assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri. A UN probe and Syria to the rescue.

AVIAN FLU The H5N1 strain of bird flu was discovered in Greece. The Conference Board of Canada, meanwhile, said that if the virus mutates to human-to-human transmission and hits Canada, it could kill as many as 1.6 million people here.

WANKERS STAY HOME Visits by Americans to Canada plunged to a more than quarter-century low, with only 2.4 million Americans crossing the border in August—down 5.9 per cent from July. The drop was attributed to the strong loonie, high gas prices, and border security and terrorism issues.

DESPOINAGE Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe said an independent Quebec should have its own army and spy service. Separatists have been divided over the question of Quebec having a military.

WILINA At week's end Florida was hearing for the possible arrival of hurricane Wilina, which had already pounded Mexico's Yucatan peninsula and was also expected to hit Cuba.

BY PATRICK LAURICANT



BY THE NUMBERS

Does drinking and driving continue to be a problem in Canada? The results of the latest Maclean's/Inper's Medco poll:

• 68% of Canadians say they have driven after consuming too much alcohol. 95% say they have never done so. But 40% say they have driven after having one drink, while 25% have driven after two drinks.

• 36% say the problem of drunk driving has lessened, while 32% think it has gotten worse. 49% feel penalties should be more severe.

• 71% would drive a friend who had been drinking home, 49% would take the keys away.

SOURCE: POLLING AND ANALYSIS UNIT, MEDCO

TELECOM WARS Nortel announced it had hired Mike Zaffin, former No. 2 at Motorola, as CEO. That day later, Motorola said Zaffin was saying he had breached contracts and could disclose trade secrets to Nortel. Meanwhile, BCE Inc. snaggled former Telus Mobility president George Cope to run Telus Canada's traditional phone unit.

BREAST CANCER The *New England Journal of Medicine* said in an editorial that results for the breast cancer drug Herceptin have been "simply stunning" and suggest that a cure for the disease may finally have been found. It based that opinion on results for

more than 5,000 women worldwide who have taken the drug.

NIGHTMARE Saturday Night magazine announced that it is suspending publication. The venerable general-interest magazine has previously shut down three times in its 115-year history.

RETURN New Democratic Sen. Robinson announced that he will shun a political comeback. The controversial former MP, who left politics after he was caught trading a diamond ring, ostensibly for long nose purses. Mr. Robinson, will challenge cabinet minister Hedy Fry in Vancouver Centre.

SHRINE The 40th outbreak by B.C. teachers looked set to end as Premier Gordon Campbell said he would accept the union's recommendation. At week's end, teachers, who will get \$40 million for pay harmonization throughout the province, were asking firm numbers for support for agreed needs made and discussed before accepting the deal.

RAMBLER The World Series got underway on the weekend with the Houston Astros of the National League taking on the American League's Chicago White Sox. If the series goes all seven games, it will wrap up next Sunday.

PAKISTAN As snow and freezing temperatures regaled the arrival of the rough 18 million winter, Pakistani officials sharply increased the death toll from the Dec. 8 earthquake to more than 78,000. With helicopters unable to land in the country's mountainous and steep landscape, remote villages remain cut off from the outside world.

GOING UP Worried about inflation, which peaked at 2.9 per cent in the current quarter, the Bank of Canada raised its key lending rate to three per cent. Commercial banks responded by raising mortgage rates.

HEALTH CUTS With General Motors set to lose more than US\$4 billion this year, the company struck a tentative deal with the United Auto Workers that would reduce auto-workers holidays for roughly US\$15 billion. There are 2.5 General Motors factories for every current worker.

How do you spot an arthritis sufferer who's free of pain?



The LAKOTA Way
MEDICINE FOR PAIN

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MORE THAN JUST A FEW BAD APPLES

Forget Adscam—the trouble is in the way some federal programs are managed

WHEN JUSTICE John Gomery delivers his first report on the sponsorship affair next week, reaction likely won't follow the usual script. Opposition parties typically respond to a scandal by shouting as loudly as possible that there's never been such corruption. The government, meanwhile, tries to play it all down. But watch for a more revealing twist: Expect that Martin to opt for the same as-bell-sollars he took on the road after Adscam exploded last year, while rejecting his recent claim that the whole mess amounted to an "unrecognizable aberration"—extraordinary but unique. Opposition leaders might as well forget trying to sound angrier than the Prime Minister—their real task is to be more analytical. They need to tell the Canadians that Gomery has uncovered not merely the misdeeds of a highly paid cast of villains over a few years, but more evidence of a Liberal governing culture that has long tolerated everything from brown fraud to mundane mismanagement.

Showing that broad pattern will not be easy. The looting of sponsorship funds by Montreal advertising executives and apparently compliant federal officials has already led to criminal charges. The other big dirty scandals of recent memory—the absurdly over-budget gun registry, say, or huge losses in accountability over job grants doled out by the Human Resources Development—were clearly about mismanagement, not malfeasance. But auditor general Sheila Fraser, whose scathing February 2004 report exposed the multi-million-dollar scope of the sponsorship scam, is rated an early pick for attention to the big picture behind the scandal itself. "It concerns me," Fraser said just a few weeks after her blockbuster report, "that the focus on wrong doing of individuals could divert attention from the more serious pervasive problems

that have a negative impact on how well programs are managed."

There is little doubt that Gomery, too, has come to see the scandal as a product of the system itself. His report next week will detail what happened in this particular high-profile case, and point the finger at individuals. "He could blame people for misconduct, he could accuse people, he could accuse organizations," said François Perreault, Gomery's spokesman. Conventional wisdom around Ottawa is that members of

report on lobbying by Paul Pross, a Dalhousie University public administration professor emeritus, and an expert on pressure politics. Another potentially key report, by Ottawa consultant Liane Bédard, will examine the role of ministers' staffers. By turning his attention to players like lobbyists and ministerial aides, Gomery has signaled he's interpreting his mandate to get to the bottom of the scandal as broadly as possible.

The Liberals are already showing they've a need to prove they're making changes. Treasury Board President Reg Alcock and Public Works Minister Scott Brison last week announced changes to federal spending oversight. Even the sharpest critics generally applaud the improvements in bureaucratic checks and balances that are supposed to safeguard spending. "It's very optimistic about the internal spending-control mechanisms," says Jean Clements, director of fiscal studies for the conservative Fraser Institute. But while he welcomes better oversight of bureaucrats by bureaucrats, Clements calls for more fundamental reforms, including mandatory public disclosure of how departments respond when audits discover waste—or worse.

That kind of broad transparency might have put a stop to the sponsorship scam far earlier. Four years before Fraser's famous report, an internal audit flagged similar doubts about the program. But Affaire Québec, who oversees the program as public works minister at the time, finally responded to that audit with a three-page letter to the Treasury Board, declaring that "the required corrective measures have been completed." They didn't. Mal Gagliardi later learned that among them is a

GOMERY'S second report will likely focus on the "serious pervasive problems" Fraser spoke of after her blockbuster



Gomery sees the scandal as a product of the system's flaws, the auditor general (left)

done on a public website, he might not have tried to get away with such a flimsy follow-up. Clements points out other examples where the lack of openness less problems four years after they have been discovered. In 1998, the auditor general reported various problems in the way social insurance numbers are managed, including the using of random more 80% than there are

people in 2001, another report found the problem had only worsened. "There should be continuing, very public follow-up until the problems are fixed," Clements says.

Of course politicians and senior managers aren't often enthusiastic about being "very public" with updates about their most embarrassing files. Nor are they eager to talk about the relationship between political patronage and public money that the close connection is so troubling. Gomery heard testimony about Liberal

organizers in Montreal whose tangled activities involved the sponsorship program, party fundraising and lobbying the government. In fact, party strategists who told on campaign often cash in as their political ties between electioneering for campaigns trying to win federal contracts or influence policy. That lucrative industry made headlines again recently when Canadian Satellite Radio Inc., in pursuit of a federal license, hired a squad of well-connected Liberals, including Richard Mahoney and John Duffy, two key members of what's called "the board," Martin's close circle of supporters.

That sort of overlap is legal and routine. The question facing Gomery is whether new rules are needed to make sure such relationships don't metastasize into the sort of abuses perpetrated by the Liberal-friendly advertising executives who took advantage of the quality of sponsorship cash. Duff Cocher, coordinator for Ottawa-based Demoscopy Watch, calls for much stronger limits on movement between politics and business, including a ban on lobbying by those who work on political campaigns. As it stands, he says, there is "zero enforcement" of the existing rules. The Lobbyists Registration Act, which requires lobbyists to register their activities, has been in force since 1988—but no one has ever been found to have failed to comply with it.

Fraser seems less concerned with those who try to influence government decisions than with holding the decision-makers to account. She criticizes fuzzy guidelines that make a minister "unavailable," but not "too available," for government's actions. "Let's say an audit reveals problems that arose under the leadership of a former minister," she has said. "It's not clear who—if anyone—is accountable." And deputy ministers aren't answerable to Parliament, she says, but are required to give "an account of their own activity of the department" to parliamentary committees—a "muddy distinction." Gomery might well propose how to clear up those of accountability.

The problem with the solution the government's critics tend to propose—more transparency, tougher lobbying rules, greater accountability—is they are worthy but unexciting. Next week's report will feature more gripping stuff about who got the cash and how. The trick for those hoping Gomery's work will lead to real change is to make that more a message to policy-makers. ■



WHAT NOT TO DO NEXT TIME

A decade after the Quebec referendum, three recent books in French offer guidance on mistakes made in 1995

HAS IT REALLY BEEN a decade since the votes were counted? Indeed it has: Oct. 30, 1995. Yet the Quebec sovereignty referendum remains our best attempt to reckon with the near-cathartic of memory in so many ways, the campaign of 1995 is still going on. Jacques Parizeau blazed the events leading up to his big night to the periodicity

hockey game. It finished in a tie. The entire period refuses to end. In Ottawa, the grim highlight of November will be the release of Justice John Goss's report into the worst excesses that occurred on Jean Charest's watch in the story about 1995's near defeat in Quebec, the month will reach a peak of sorts with the announce-

ment, on Nov. 15, of the Parti Québécois' new leader, the third since Parizeau quit and, if the winner is the prickly young bookie-writer André Bouchard, the first in the party's history who didn't belong to its founding generation. The national political parties—and all of us with them—feel trapped in an electoral

Grounding Day. The whole country stands on a fixed lock whose defining characteristic is the national parties' inability to win a few dozen Quebec seats from the Bloc Québécois. When it comes to winning Quebecers' hearts, or even their self-interest, today's federal leadership is a chronic leader's good idea. This is not ideal, given the unpopu-

larity of Jean Charest's government and the concerning tendency of poll respondents in Quebec to reply that if asked the same question today, they would vote for it roughly the same proportion as a decade ago.

Given all that, it's worth examining the two losses of 1995 yet again for fresh lessons. Three recent books, published only in French and barely noticed outside Quebec, offer handy guidance.

The third volume of Pierre Duchesne's epic *Paroisses* biography, *Jacques Parizeau: Tous les Leçons, 1987-1995*, arranges us who the real driving force of 1995 was. Parizeau, who managed to carry out his adventures despite the repeated objections of all his allies. Among the most stubborn slogans was Lucien Bouchard, when everyone remembers in the darling of the 1995 campaign but who actually would never have been elected if the choice had been his. "Improved politics is improvement," Parizeau told Duchesne in 2000. "So if you're elected with a program, you carry it out. The policy we're losing, that we're headed for a wall? Then we knock the wall down? And Bouchard?"

"Lucien Bouchard has the reference of a lion," Parizeau says.

Charest is no substitute for the force of character. Bouchard gets too much credit (or blame) for two good weeks of campaigning, and Parizeau not enough for getting the movement to a point where Bouchard could strike. The members of political parties are forever looking past buildings in search of saviors. The weakness of Bouchard and Bernard Landry when each took over the PQ leadership was not that they were unlikely, but that they were not during. Fortunately for Canada, the PQ is no closer to learning the lesson that most parties. It is preparing to choose between Bouchard and Charest's partner Pauline Marois, both of whom were among the PQ's first dogged

loyalists in Duchesne's book. He was a senior minister in Jean Lesage's government before the 1980s when Parizeau called upon him again, as secretary general to the government—and, Duchesne reveals, to execute two crucial secret projects. In late 1993, Bernard's mandate was to figure out how to deliver on Parizeau's desire to hold a referendum as soon as possible after an election. In early 1995, he helped define the public-consultation relations between Canada and a second Quebec.

You'd think the PQ would look long and hard in a man Jacques Parizeau wanted to do his heavy lifting. Secession is hard. It triggers questions of conservatism and emotional law that have nothing to do with ordinary public administration. Parizeau was mostly the only person there of whom his party ever had Bernard as another. But he is a strong public performer who has taken to convincing his party, albeit with considerable accuracy, for its sloppy thinking. Parizeau would rather see a second to the dubious theme of



Canada in early rally, Montreal, Oct. 20, 1995. Parizeau, Oct. 20, 1995.

two professional flat-earthers, Bouchard and Marois. Still, it would be easier to take comfort from the long basic for seriousness in the PQ campaign if the indecisive side had not shown itself to be perfectly capable of showing itself in the last 100 days. Parizeau with

ing to learn from failure would do more than to examine two other recent books.

Marcel Cardinal's *Paroisses* (Bookings Point) is drawn from the research and interviews contained by CBC and Radio-Canada years for the English and French-language public broadcasters' recent four-hour miniseries about the referendum.

The strength in Cardinal's book comes from the obsessive reporting. But the author, a former Radio-Canada ombudsman, is almost too own-possessive. Readers are left to draw their own conclusions. To say the least, the same can't be said for Robert Philip's *Le référendaire* (The Station Reference). Philip was born in Thunder Bay, Ont., and has fine language in English, but he has been an articulate advocate of



IS BOUCHARD BACK?

In a province devoid of leadership, his broadside got everyone's attention

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES, Lucien. The charismatic leader who rose like a comet to driving his flock onto greater greatness in a referendum 30 years ago now warns that Quebec is bound for the slag heap of history if it doesn't reform quickly. And, the former septuagenarian says, the province's future constitutional status will have little impact on that outcome. Last week, Bouchard put a spectacular end to the radio silence he'd imposed on himself in 2001 after he shunned the door to the Parti Québécois and

walked away from the premier's job. Heading a coalition of intellectuals, businesspeople and former pols like himself, he delivered a polarizing manifesto that exploded like a bomb in the void that public debate in Quebec has become.

And, eh yes, the man who had demanded "finding everyone else for Quebec's woes and uncertainties is an art form 10 years ago

now says Quebecers will have only themselves to blame if they don't reform their ways and kick some of their sacred cows in the groin. Bouchard's his-side view comes at a time when disgruntled citizens have renewed their faith in a driver on politicians they have

Bouchard, shown with others in his coalition, knows a thing or two about deadlocks.

stopped respecting and believing. They may not believe Bouchard either. But he was not afraid to spill out some blunt truths that no elected official has been strong or gutsy enough, to utter lately.

"At the very moment when we should be radically changing the way we view ourselves and the world around us," the manifesto charges, "the day-to-day changes to the way government functions, a bold project, the most tried and tested responsibility or the smallest change is comfortable habits, is met with an angry waxy and objection, or at best, indifference."

Wax—a gas burner. With the subtlety of a stockbroker, the manifesto concludes:

"This outright rejection of change hurls Quebec because it runs the risk of running us into the republic of the status quo, where all from the 20th century."

Now, Lucien Bouchard knows a thing or two about political deadlocks, paralysis and stagnation. He turned his back on the federal Conservatives to found the like Quebecers, which he drew as a wreck into the gears of the House of Commons. He led a referendum campaign that split Quebec right

nowhere and then again in sporadic willows.

The only alternative to Charest, the Parti Québécois, in its even worse shape: leaderless and in the clutches of a posse of left-wing separatist politicians who have exposed a binding philosophy that alternates between imperialist and laissez-faire. Their new leader will either be a left-wing gay man who's admitted to smoking cocaine while a cabinet minister, or a right-wing former vice premier who once tried to replace her



Charest after the 1995 referendum back then Bouchard elevated blame into an art form.

leader and failed. Bouchard grows, and they look like doves carrying for cover.

Little solace can be expected from Ottawa, thanks to the sponsorship scandal. There, three opposition leaders try to tread one another in the outrage department while the emboldened minority Prime Minister announces in both official languages that this latest scandal will be the last. There again, Quebec voters have no federalist alternative to the Liberals.

What happened?
"Our society has evolved much faster than our political culture and parties," says Jean-

HE SAYS his political days are behind him. But who knows, given the twists and turns of his career?

Herman Gagny, a political scientist at Université de Sherbrooke. "In our generation, we have multiculturalism in a complex, diversified, postmodern society—how our politics has evolved at a much slower pace."

There is some of that, of course. The referendum of 1995 occurred in the wake of the collapse of the Meech Lake accord. Meek followed the passage of the Constitution—what Quebec has yet to sign—in 1992. Parti Tricolore pursued the Constitution after the first referendum on sovereignty association in 1980. It was just 25 years ago that angry young francophones were protesting against Anglo dominance. Today, Montreal is just as diverse—and peaceful—as Toronto or Vancouver—but the PQ is still in it, and so are its lies.

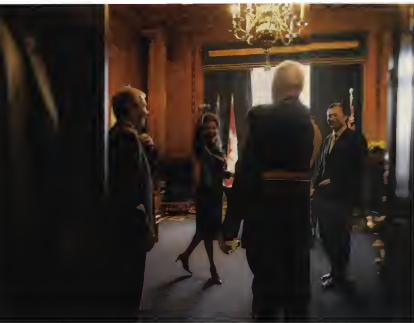
And then there's the question of leadership, or lack thereof, says CROP's Alan Gagny, the pollster who's had his finger on the national pulse for all these years. "We've become totally allergic to the bull shit that's rampant everywhere, and that sentiment is particularly acute here—people want to tell politicians to just cut the crap." Just a few days prior to Bouchard's sortie, Gagny described what, according to his polling, the corporate death of a successful political leader in Quebec would be. "First, someone strong enough to face the media fray, cut through the bubble, the political correctness, and speak the truth," Gagny said. "Then, someone who could utilize the fragile balance between social solidarity and fiscal responsibility." Another element missing in today's political discourse, Gagny said, "is a sense of direction, or purpose. Where the hell should we be headed? People need a sense of guidance."

Maybe Bouchard got a glimpse of Gagny's polling—he was on the money on all counts. Bouchard intimated, though, that his days as a politician are behind him. But who knows with a man like him, given the twists and turns of his political career, and now this new two-mile job at his former academic colleagues and their allies, the unions and pressure groups, "who have kicked the progressive label?"

"In doing this is on behalf of my children," Bouchard said last week. "No doubt. But a lot of people are going to keep close tabs on him in the rearview." With political life in Quebec fading, there's always room for someone to apply that pain that gets the heartbeat going again.

RIDEAU HALL COH LA LA

You'd have thought she was Angelina Jolie, writes SHANDA DEZIEL of Michaëlle Jean in Winnipeg



"I HATE SHOPPING," says Michaëlle Jean. "I do it all in one day, power shopping." But she loves clothes. After three days of intense government-generalfest in Winnipeg, Jean plops down on a sofa in the front room at the Manitoba lieutenant-governor's house, racks her high-heeled shoe up underneath her thigh, lies out an exhausted sigh, and happily gabs about fashion. "I do wear a lot of Canadian designers," says Jean, citing Philippe Dubuc, Michel Desjardins, Marciano, Marc Saint-Pierre. "But I have to confess that I like buy from French designers when I go to France. I try to dress as simple as possible, but very feminine too. I'm proud to be a woman, I enjoy it."

Jean watches her daughter-in-law, and you'll see what she means. Even in her most formal dress, such as suspending the honour guard, Jean moves with a sultry swagger: shoulders back, arms and hips swinging. This loose, sexy, this sensuous, helped draw Winnipeggers to the 48-year-old bombshell last week, when she and her 64-year-old (Winnipeg) husband, Jean-Daniel Laford, made their first official visit, to Manitoba. (They left daughter Marie-Eliane, 16, in Ottawa, as she wouldn't miss school. "We call her once a day," says Jean. "Today she told us she was in great shape, because she took the dog out. She wanted a dog, but I am taking care of Chacha. To think this trip is going to give her back the responsibility.")

Winnipeggers responded to Jean as if she were Angelina Jolie, not a mere vice-regal. "Our Governor General looks so," exclaimed one 19-year-old teenage girl, making her way up the stairs of the legislative building after a welcome ceremony. "She's gorgeous." The accolade was reinforced by red carpets, photographers, autograph-seekers and streams of fans shouting "moo-woo." One guy even yelled, "We go, girl!" Jean's hair and makeup were always perfect, and she was a

run-of-the-mill of the camera—even in a mob of people, she'd find the photographer and stare directly into the lens. She made eye contact with just about everyone, ducking around her phalanx of 12 security types to wave to someone she couldn't seem to get to. Then there were those smiles—one in closed mouthed and demure, the other wide open and completely unaffected.

Our new Governor General oozes Hollywood-style glamour with an affectionate demeanor. She sensually pulls people close to her, tenderly grabbing children by the back of the neck to bring them in for an embrace, arming the hair of power women, and all but baring her eyes at men who guffaw. "She's very huggy," says Gladys Cook, 76, a substance-abuse counsellor and Order of Manitoba recipient who met Jean at a government dinner. "That's why I like her." Jean's staff is still getting used to it. "People want to be close to her and touch her, and she wants the same," says press secretary Randy Mylch, "I'm learning it happens. There's a mutual desire to connect—who am I to stop it?"

Employees who've also worked for her predecessor, Adrienne Clarkson, notice the difference. With Clarkson there were crowds, elbows, Melarni Kwong, minister to Laford, but not this crush of people. And now used to be more camouflaging and people not knowing what to do. "But Michaëlle's magnet," says Kwong, adding that Jean seems to "thrive" on the close contact.

In her attire, though, Jean seems more conservative than the often flamboyantly dressed Clarkson. Jean's wardrobe, as it were, is simple, but simple, consisting of neutral-colored slacks and jackets. There's a game to be played in finding the lady touch the adds to every outfit: a hint of lace on a long grey skirt, a silk scarf belt on a plain black dress, loose red sleeves peeking out of a brown tweed jacket. In Winnipeg, she was wearing only sheer jewellery—pearl hoop earrings, a simple brooch and three

The Governor General at the Manitoba legislative building in Winnipeg

underneath rings. And she alternated between two pairs of black shoes, one sensible, the other glibly heeled and pointy.

Jean is just as tense with her food and drink consumption. At a dinner thrown by the Manitoba government, she wasted the night with a toast, but had only a sip of her white wine after that. "And she just picked at her food, ate a little bit of everything, including the dessert," said her waitress at the Port Garry Hotel. So, a good chunk of the dry-rub rib-eye with its sautéed radish and Brussels went to waste.

"She had Lafund moaning one table over—he might have finished it. At lunch the following day with Manitoba filmmakers, he downed a full glass of red wine and a glass of white and ate everything on his plate, doing up the remaining sauce and potatoes with a piece of bread. And his staff couldn't drag him away from the table until he finished his crêpe bûche."

At first glance Lafund—who could be seen wiping the rain off his bald head at an outdoor ceremony—seems like Jim Carrey's Cousin Glen in the Lewny Skotch movie. But he grows harderhearted by the minute thanks to his playful personality. If he's a seagull (as some have speculated), he's a particularly affable one—tipping his hat to still-unknown reaching to squeeze the shoulders of most people he passes. At the film makers' luncheon, he was every bit the French intellectual philosopher: documentation, he he teased the young group like pearls and balled at being called "your Excellency." Unprovoked, he defends his new wife. "Because there was no conversation between what I did, documentary films and *Bleu du Haut*. In this job I can defend and struggle for the unsolvable in wilderness. It is clear for me. I didn't invent Robson Hall, it's there—like Parliament, it's there. We have to use that for the best."

Lafund won't undertake any new films during Jean's term, but there are a couple he must finish. The first, with a working title of *History of Passion* and about a black Anishinabe living in the Middle East, could spark more controversy for the couple if it takes a negative stance against the U.S. Surely it couldn't cause more trouble than his now infamous 1991 film *A la maison*—about Manitoba's anti-colonialist poet, Anne

MacIver—in which Jean, Quebec sovereigntist and often accused of being independentist, Jean says that only one person in Winnipeg expressed concern to her over that issue. And she's prepared to defend herself.

"I think independence is a wonderful value that we all share as Canadians," she told MacIver. "And once you see the film, you realize that I was there to talk about the British experience and British history. There's no reason for me to have regret, because I know exactly what I was talking about. Independence was a great value for them; independence is a great value for women and for every Canadian because it is a part of who we are. And that doesn't mean that I support the separatist movement in Quebec. What I love about documentary films is they question history, question reality, they bring facts and they come with a point of view."

While Jean will fight to the death for artistic freedom, she's just as passionate about community services and programs, especially for children and talented women (only in her career she worked with women's shelters at Quebec). While touring one such facility for Winnipeg women, she listened to residents' stories. "We had to live in a basement apartment," said Maureen Bernadine, director of Manitoba's family violence prevention program. "And you should have seen the women the week in, they were going back in for a second time."

Affection seems to be what people want most from Jean. During an assembly of Children of the Earth, an all-male school, the Governor General asked why Charles Smith, 27, chose her goals and dreams. It was a painful moment when Smith opened up in front of a room of strangers, saying, "I don't want to end upon the streets. I want a job. I want to take care of myself and take care of my family."

Jean he back with a sample, "You deserve it," before pulling her for a double-check last. Later, one rough-looking 15-year-old, outside smoking, couldn't hide their jealousy.



Winnipeg welcome: (clockwise from top) pre-Governor Sunday night the welcome at the Legislative Building; the making crowd; Jean-Luc Lafund at the Winnipeg Art Gallery



"I wanted to give her a kiss and hug," said Rachel Cameron. Her friend Becky Hughes laughed in agreement. "Don't Charles!"

It's at functions with specific groups that Jean really seems to make connections. She greeted a group of Franco-Manitobans. "You will always have an ally in me, in terms of the French language and the place it should have in the country." And a Children of the Earth, when a boy asked how she could help preserve traditional life, she declared, "I think Aboriginal culture is the heritage of every Canadian, every person in this country. Your songs, your traditions and they go straight to my heart, and I feel they're most true."

Just a moment of a father than a father. The former TV journalist wants to hear people's stories and what they have to say about their Canada. But her job calls for speediness. And while the Winnipeg crowd seemed to

hang on her every word, her formal who ended with a dance with over poetic language, phrases, clichés and repetitive motions of "beating down soldiers" and being "a citizen among equals" and "a worker of action." It doesn't help that her delivery can be painfully slow.

The speeches are collaborations between Jean and Alain-Bernard MacIver, a poet who has also written speeches for federal cabinet ministers. They

go for walks and have long discussions, MacIver says. "We come from the same generation—Alec's little older—and we have similar backgrounds. She studied Italian literature, I studied French literature, and we love the same Canadian authors and poets." Now the two communicate about their shared love, Montreal. "I miss it," says Jean, almost wistfully. "It's my city."

Winnipeggers may be sorry to hear her heart has elsewhere, but there's solace in the cheering. This week, some real movie stars rode into town to shoot scenes for a movie *James Bay*. If Winnipeg, think MacIver and Jean Dorel are glamorous, with all they get a load of food and Angina.



THE FINE PRINT

Iraq's new constitution is an achievement, but one fraught with dangers

"WE THE SONS of Mesopotamia, land of the prophets, rising place of the holy inmates, the leaders of civilization and the creators of the alphabet, the cradle of arithmetic—on one land, the first law put in place by mankind was written..." So begins the constitution that the Iraqi people appeared to adopt last week, as a national referendum the Bush administration lauds as a milestone for democracy—and critics fear has sown the seeds of civil war. It took America's founders more than a decade after their independence to draft and

adopt their own constitution, and another 74 years for the country to fight a civil war over what it meant. The Iraqis had more months to write theirs—in the midst of a bloody insurgency in which some lawmakers were gunned down for their efforts. With such an accelerated schedule, pessimists predict Iraq's Gerfahyab may come sooner rather than later.

Spanning 25 pages with English translation, the Iraq constitution is in this place a landmark democratic document that aims to guarantee what those who overthrew Saddam Hussein wanted for the country: Individual rights are protected, political power is divided, and the judiciary enjoys independence. "This is a very positive day for the Iraqis and, as well, for world peace," declared George W. Bush after the balloting (the UN was recognizing surprisingly high voter turnout in some areas). Examined more closely, though, the constitution is clearly the result of a divisive process in which Iraq's Kurds, Shi'a and Sunnis each expressed its own interests, and which resulted in a document that divides so much power to the regions that some

"And the perception now is that it's not particularly strong among the Sunnis."

Canadians, of course, know that the creation of a federal constitution can be a messy and erratic process of brinkmanship and backroom deals—one that can have profound ramifications on national unity. And in Iraq's case, one provision in particular could contribute to a fracturing of the country along ethnic and sectarian lines. Overwhelmingly opposed by the minority Sunni Arabs, who make up 10 per cent of Iraq's 23-million-strong population, it allows the 18 provinces to continue into powerful self-governing regions—reflecting the artificiality of autonomy-seeking Kurds in Iraq's north and the majority Shi'a population in the south. But that area are the main oil-producing regions, while the Sunnis, who ruled Iraq for generations, are concentrated in the oil-poor middle of the country. And there's the rub: the constitution is vague on who will control future development: Baghdad—or the regions?

Moreover, the constitution assigns to the regions any authority not clearly granted

to Baghdad, leaving only defence and foreign affairs as explicitly federal issues, while education, health, infrastructure and even customs are to be shared. In cases of conflict, regional laws are to prevail. And regions could raise their local militias into regional security forces. "In Canadian terms, it would be as if the western provinces could band together and form a region that took responsibility for all external affairs, and left Ottawa to deal with foreign affairs, defence, and issuing currency," explains Nathan Brown, a specialist in Middle Eastern constitutions at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "That might not lead to civil war in Canada, but in Iraq some people may want to stop it by force." A civil war is not inevitable, adds Brown, "but the constitution doesn't do much to prevent it."

Annihilation of armed conflict is a worry for Ahmed Rahim, who until October 2004

Sahar Masoud, 18, shows her ink-stained finger after voting in the referendum

served as Iraq's envoy to Washington. "To devolve power so quickly and so drastically away from an already weak central government, to regions that have no capacity except what is provided by militia, in my view is a recipe for even greater chaos than we now have in Iraq," she said at a recent conference at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative Washington think tank that backed the inquiry. The outcome is a reaction against years of tyranny from Baghdad, Rahim acknowledged, but "is not written with a view of constructing a viable state or a viable country in the future."

Supporters of the constitution argue that a loose form of federalism may be inevitable. "A plurilateral, regional system is not necessarily antagonistic to unity," says James

Jeffrey, a senior adviser to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and the State Department's coordinator for Iraq. "But rather, it may be the only way, absent the kind of industrial-strength oppression we saw under Saddam, to hold a country together." Asked whether the vote will speed up U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq, Jeffrey said "no," but added that "the political process is very important for defining the insurgency"—expressing the hope that security would improve as indigenous army groups would be drawn out of politics, and foreign recruits isolated.

There are former optimists, though, who doubt such high hopes. Saman Maliky, one of Iraq's best-known dissidents, is the founder of the Iraq Memory Foundation, intended to preserve all the evidence of Saddam's atrocities. In one promising tactic, he mailed the Oval Office on the day U.S. troops pulled down Saddam's statue in

April 2003, and previously told the President the Americans would be greeted with "sweets and flowers." More severely, though, at the American Enterprise Institute conference he lamented, "We did not know how powerful was the rhetoric of sectarian and ethnic violence." The constitution so weakens the central government, he said, that it may have the effect of "perhaps even dealing a death blow to the idea of Iraq that had sustained the opposition for so many years."

The concerns don't end with federalism. The document is rich in guaranteed rights—free property and work to attainment, health insurance, and freedoms of religion, the press and political association. But some rights are limited by the need to protect "morals" or the "public order"—language used to curtail freedom of discourse in the Arab world, customs Brown. Women are also guaranteed the right to participate in affairs of state and run for office, with a quarter of parliamentary seats set aside for them. But human rights and women's groups are alarmed by the constitution's second article, which declares Islam to be the official religion of the state and "a basic source of legislation." The new Supreme Federal Court, which

is to interpret the constitution, is required to include experts in Islamic law. Their number and other crucial details are to be decided by a new parliament, to be elected in Dec. 15.

That election will give life to the new constitutional order, and indicate whether Sunnis become a part of the government or strive to undermine it. It will likely take place against the backdrop of Saddam's trial for crimes against humanity, which began last week and was adjourned until Nov. 28. For now, Washington is portraying the constitutional vote as a reason to celebrate. Sunnis, who boycotted last January's elections, turned out this time—even if they may have mostly voted "No." "The key here is the Sunnis have voted in large numbers," Rice said. "That means they're reaching their lot with the democratic process—and one way or another, Iraqis are going to be in a position to move forward."



"TO DEVOLVE power so quickly is a recipe for even greater chaos," says René Rahim, a former Iraqi envoy





WHY WOMEN AREN'T CEOs

Neil French dared challenge the myth of gender equality, and paid for it

NEIL FRENCH should have just smiled and shrugged his shoulders. When the person in the audience asked him why if there weren't more women in the senior executive ranks of the advertising business, he could've just shrugged something as generic as the challenges that still face working women. He might have shaken his head and said how his business still has a ways to go to reach the glass ceiling. Everybody would've liked that.

But no. Neil French had to go ahead and be honest, and it cost him his job.

When that question came from the audience at an industry gathering in Toronto a couple of weeks ago, the creative director of advertising juggernaut WTP Group PLC said women "don't make it to the top because they don't deserve it." He said they couldn't devote themselves fully to the top jobs because of family commitments. And anybody who doesn't fully commit to a job "is crap at it." His blunt assessment earned him no demerit; the *Globe and Mail* reported his comments in its business gossip column, and the message spread to radio and TV. The piece began slinging around words like "sex discrimination," and Neil went from being the host to, however, back down. He reiterated that women are not better at senior corporate positions because men are unwilling to make the personal sacrifices of time and energy required to be the best.

French, of course, can afford to be unapologetic. He's a legend in the ad industry, and he makes more money than the *Playboy* himself, so he won't be having our readers at all jobs any time soon. Talent, of which French has loads, is always in high demand, even when it's wedded by other competing big mouths. So, his call is a sympathy.

The theme of this little drama is that it has done more to stir down discussion of gender in the workplace than it has to advance it. French didn't say women are ill-equipped for top jobs—though that's how his comments were widely interpreted. He said women chose not to take everything the male world has to offer. And behind the posturing and the self-serving code comments that poured forth last week from every corner of the media, there was

a lot of truth in what French was saying, and everybody knows it.

There's no point in even debating the fact that women face higher barriers to corporate advancement than do men. The *Wall Street Journal* carried the term "glass ceiling" more than 20 years ago, and it still exists, despite the efforts of human resources departments across the continent. Women comprise about 46 per cent of America's workforce but less than eight per cent of its top managers, according to the National Association of Women Business Owners. Numbers in Canada and much of Europe are similar. Almost half of the companies in Canada's benchmark stock index don't have a single woman on their board of directors.

That is only one accepted explanation for this discrepancy: women and gender bias

Today's working woman, a professional with an inescapable dilemma: if you sacrifice your family, in any way, for the sake of your career, then you're a busy mother. If you sacrifice career for family, then you're letting down the generations of feminists who fought to give you a shot at a decent career. To deal with this impossible, modern society has turned up a set of trendy myths built around the idea that no sacrifice is necessary. There are 90 hours in every day. By seasonal emergency lenders. And with proper planning and enough effort one can have a fabulous, lucrative career and an idyllic family life. If this balance eludes you, then you've failed, and should buy more self-help books. Anybody who does challenge the myth is a misogynist.

What nobody seems to acknowledge is that the inability of women to advance in the workplace is a family failure as much as a professional one. Why, if a woman is pursuing a challenging business career, can't the husband be the one to drop everything at work and pick the kids up from school? An economist would say whichever spouse has the lower-paying job should be the one to sacrifice career prospects for the sake of family, but that's not the way it works in the real world. Instead, we've established a system in which employers must make up for the lack of gender equality in the home.

When somebody has the tendency to suggest that a woman who takes more time off to raise her kids is a less valuable employee than a man who doesn't, and is therefore less likely to be promoted, that person is biased at the source. French did make a couple of mistakes. He overgeneralized and ignored the fact that subtle chauvinism still exists in our society. Those mistakes meant his comments were too simplistic, and incomplete. He put men and women and not wrong. Play me or not, it's still about it on public company. ■

Read Steve March's writing, "All Business," at www.bellbusiness.ca/SteveMarch

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THE VILLAGE of Saint-Emilion is located in a corner of rural France where the wines are robust and so are the men. It was described to me thus by Michèle Pujos-Gautraud, a physician and "andrologist" who piles her trade there, counseling the sons of southwestern Bordeaux should they ever encounter difficulty in the bedroom. French males in general are Pujos-Gautraud's area of expertise. She can reel off their sexual tendencies with the clinical dispassion of a botanist describing grapevine roots. But when the topic turns to another, increasingly common variety of men—the preening boy-toys proliferating throughout the Western world—her detachment evaporates. "These men I see on television and in magazines, they are like women!" she marvels. "With their facial lotions

and colored soaps. It's quite training." *Frontal Hair* Body wears Maracans and undresses and handbags that look like purses. Pujos-Gautraud tells them off like Julie Andrews singing *My Favorite Things*, leaving an impression of modern method as she big shopping trip down the Champs Élysées. On a scientific level, she's intrigued. But as a 55-year-old woman accustomed to Gallic males in all their swarthy, skirt-chasing glory, she finds the trends disconcerting. "A few years ago, I might have said that men didn't take care of themselves enough," she says. "Now they're doing so much and more—maybe too much. With these men, I could not fall in love."

It's become almost cliché to portray men as being in some state of socio-sexual chrysalis,

slowly emerging from a few millennia of male hegemony and discovering the woman made themselves. The post-feminist ethos unleashed no end of books, studies, surveys and essays charting this trajectory. In most cases portrayed as a rise from primordial savagery to a more advanced state of being like primates developing opposable thumbs, men were supposed to be acquiring traits to better serve them in a world where gender lines don't matter. Aggression would give way to sensuality, ruggedness to style, stoicism to "emotional intelligence."

But faith in this doctrine of social progress has ebbed recently. A few years ago, the American feminist Susan Faludi surprised the intellectual world with *Stuffed*, a book arguing that contemporary society has deprived

men of useful roles, making them disproportionately. The source, more than the argument, gave pause. *Faludi's* previous volume, *Backlash*, had been a kind of manifesto for women siding against the patriarchy. If someone like her pined us, we must really be in trouble.

Now, social scientists and medical researchers around the world are taking up the cause. Pujos-Gautraud was among several experts in human sexuality who spoke at a symposium titled "The Male Ravaged by Daily Stress" during last summer's annual World Conference of Sexology in Montreal. Together, the academics described a gender once secure in comfy archetypes like breadwinner, protector and head of household teetering on a host of unfamiliar rules like

HE'S COME UNDONE

After all their 'evolving,' men run the risk of obscuring the meaning of male altogether



warrior, homemaker and—yes—sex object. Male ambrosias are noble, they snowed-edged, surveys suggest more than three quarters of men believe they're more important than money, power or prestige. And growing numbers see pleasure leave as a respectable, sensitive option. But we're not following through. Recent studies indicate fathers actually spend less time at household chores than they did 15 years ago, while women still bear the brunt of child-rearing duties. Assuming men are kinder about their domestic responsibilities than their more conservative, purple-corded fathers, the failure to produce results seems like a fool-proof formula for self-hatred.

Dates our growing preoccupation with appearance. A 1997 survey by *Psychology Today* found that 43 per cent of American males were unhappy with their looks, up from about 34 per cent in the late 1980s. If you subtract breast augmentation, men account for nearly half the cosmetic surgery performed in the United States. "We're not quite as obsessed up about appearance as women," concludes Michael Kimmel, a sociologist at State University of New York at Stony Brook, and author of a forthcoming book titled *Goodman*. "But we're closing the gap. We've been sucked into the same sort of compulsive pattern that women were made earlier."

Wife all this up, say experts, and what you get is stress. Stress that leads to depression, stress that causes marital problems. Among the most symptomatic is the Marital Symptom Index, the number of re-connections at least occasionally taking men's anxiety levels among men to create dysfunction. Laurie Berman, a clinical psychologist and sex therapist from Montreal, says she's been treating more and more men for performance anxiety in the past five years—more in young in 18 and 19. "We've heard women complain for years that they're just too tired to have sex," she says. "Well, the same holds true for men. Sometimes, they just shut down."

Our fathers and grandfathers would undoubtedly find this amusing: a generation of men defined by the what? Nihil? Nothing? Compared to the Man of Letters, struggles of earlier times—industrialization, war, economic depression—such fears sound preposterous. But men in the 21st century face a challenge. It is less a test of their masculinity than a search for masculinity itself.

WITH THIS IN MIND, Madelon's recently converted to an antiscience panel of four not quite middle-aged men at a sports bar in Toronto and asked them to discuss her art, anxieties, hopes and frustrations. Or, put another way, their feelings. They were Tens, a 39-year-old mortgage broker raised in a traditional Greek family; Patrick, a 40-year-old Toronto business consultant and father of three; Scott, a single 39-year-old who



owns a city bus, and Scott, a 34-year-old newspaper job who sold out early.

In the beer-flooded, baseball highlight-lit barroom from the 17 television sets overhead, Patrick, the father of three, snowed-edged the crutch of weight of domestic responsibilities as one's prime source of stress—the pressure of making sure he makes cash as he can to secure his family's future. "I want to be big guy who participates in household decisions, who's there to help raise the kids," he says. "I purposefully chose a career that would give me that flexibility. Even then it can be tough."

Patrick and Scott, the mortgage broker, agree that general women's domestic how-guys should look and behave, a fact that leaves them with a vague sense of relevance. They now dress, think and act to satisfy their own, or professional standards set with women in mind. The fashion industry is a sure point. Asked their thoughts on a spread from a popular style magazine for men—in it featured a poorly fitted-looking model wearing heavy sweats, a flared pantsuit and fashion shoes—Tom snarled the

magazine that is disgusting.

Scott, who arrived as a conservatively cut suit, looked inflated. "I have never seen a guy dressed like that in my life," he said. Scott, still wearing his short-sleeved bow-tie shirt, seemed to take the whole thing literally. "You know just looking at this guy this he doesn't work."

Part of this seemed a single man's posturing. But behind the bluster was a concern,

that purchase are seen as compromised."

On the surface, this makes a certain amount of sense. As the modern male's challenges shift from work and career to, say, child-rearing, it's usually a reward for him to achieve old role models. But everyone, from church leaders to naive elders, agrees that young men need ethical roots in the home: stories of adolescence. If men in their 30s and 40s are feeling this jaded, what does it bode for the next generation?

IF YOU'RE A WOMAN, this is probably the point where you've had enough bellyaching about role models, time constraints and unreasonable social requirements. Perhaps, you're thinking. Stretched by the conflicting demands of career, housework and parenting? Welcome to womanhood now, oh, 1975. Upset by unrealistic ideas of masculine sexuality? Try spending one week in a set of four-inch heels and a push-up top.

But according to some researchers, women bear more responsibility for the current male malaise, because they've been sending conflicting signals about what they want from men. Like physical appearance. For decades, heterosexual women have told pollsters they're attracted to a variety of masculine attributes

before culture gurus began declaring him obsolete: Muscular and his co-author, Marion Solomon and Anne O'Reilly, helped usher the term into the popular lexicon in 2003, defining it as the just-guy enough follow who's both physically, sensitivity and fashion (far to create a woman's dream date. Now, they see metrosexual as a desired self brand. The reported philosophy of its standard bearer, actor and David Beckham, is one reason. But the archetype itself flows more from what Marathia calls "emo boys," guys whose preoccupation with emotion and style devolved into eating, mining narcissism. Women (and increasingly, men), and "metrosexual" became a term of derision, connoting little more than "self-absorbed wimp."

This doesn't mean the metrosexual creature is dead. "These guys recently aren't going to throw out their designer cologne and go out and buy Old Spice again," says Kim Orl. But some reliable barometers of female preferences suggest the shift toward a more feminine male is under way. Take Holly-

wood's current crop of leading men, while each sensitive, limpid figures in Leonardo DiCaprio and Hugh Grant struck a chord with women in the 1990s, the more androgynous has become one of the most popular. From the point of view of the male of the film, it's a good thing. "I've been back to looking on a one-on-one machine like Colin Farrell, Viggo Mortensen and the Jewish David Craig, who recently won the Oscar for Best Actor."

The tag of war played out symbolically last fall in *Glory*, a film centered on a gay soldier in World War II. The film's lead actor, Kevin Spacey, was in a competition for female attention. Owen's character—a character's job whose idea of seduction is asking Julia Roberts (the "Queen of the Pole")—told him on *People magazine's* Most Beautiful People list in 2005.

THE AVERAGE SCHOLAR could draw a number of inferences from this. First, that women are different things from different men. Second, that British males are something in many women's subconscious (who hasn't been flooded by the sight of a normally disarming female leaving the bar with an utter bewilderment). But it also suggests a more nuanced view of gender roles on the part of both men and women, where the notion of rebelling the status is seen as archaic. Yes, most men now accept women's right to self-determination. But just as not every woman needs to shoot for the success rule, not every man should feel deficient for transforming himself into a domestic diva. As Marathia puts it: "There's something that feels fundamentally right about the way things are between men and women."

So he and his co-authors are floating yet another prototype of the reconstructed male, which is distinctly a throwback to such debauched types as Frank Sinatra or Cary Grant. "The 'metrosexual' as they call him, is more polished than the average hero, more masculine than a metrosexual. He is dedicated to style and quality in all aspects of life. The men in this category have defined themselves, their goals and their needs, with very little reference to women," says *The Future of Men*. "They have good relationships with women, but do not go out of their way to seek women's acceptance or approval."

Unhelpfully, the authors cite the likes of actor George Clooney and real estate mogul (Donald Trump as specimens of this new breed—as if anyone who could afford to wouldn't dress well, fix their cars and decorate himself with beautiful females in the real world, men must give their way to a new identity. To find happiness, they still have to make themselves useful to women.

OUR FATHERS AND GRANDFATHERS WOULD HOWL: A GENERATION OF MEN DEFLATED BY—WHAT? MULTI-TASKING?

This awkwardness with our unofficial matchmaker. "I don't care what those guys say about sex," answered Starr, "because I know they're all full of it. I'm interested in what women say. What do they like in bed? What turns them on?" Spoken like a new leprechaun, the often-lighthearted, but now one of several authors who's searched inside through the evening that seemed to arrive the usual bedtime required to navigate modern sexual politics. He's no "emo boy" (but he's only attentive to the women in his life, he doesn't expect any woman to remain in his orbit unless he makes her happy).

So much, then, for dispensing with our need for feminine approval. But what of the more (or much) at problem? If the pressure of change is making men apart—and women continue to be the driving force behind that change—what are the options? The few-

men on offer seem inadequate. You can moderate the symptoms of stress, but who wants his manhood measured in dosages of Zoloft, or Viagra? You could join the legions of men throughout the Western world growing for penicillin, which would make step-at-home dad a bona fide vocation. But even full penicillin benefits would leave some men with severe jobs, or with high-paying spouses. Besides which, most men remain the chief breadwinners in their households, meaning extended leave for fatherhood is simply not an option.

A few years ago, Kincaid formed a three-pronged theory about how American men were protecting their outdated idea of masculinity. They sought to exorcise others, such as women and homosexuals, from their fraternal world, he said. Or they tried escape—"lighting out," as Mark Twain would have it,

on hunting trips, or mythopoetic retreats, as a Robert Bly. When all this failed, Kincaid believed, they retreated into themselves, by closing on appearance and their ability to shape their own bodies.

As Page Guarnard's reaction illustrates, this may prove the most dangerous outcome of men's current malaise. Yes, their expatriation with appearance—re-making themselves an ever more feminine principle—has torn down many stereotypes. It may even help them understand life from a woman's point of view. But men now run the risk of obscuring the meaning of male altogether, of robbing the words of their added friction that, however frustrating, happens to be the stuff of life. If the view of one open-minded, middle-aged Irishman is anything to go by, that would be one evolutionary rung too far.



From his Mastercraft Sprinter: Cling to his favorite F1330 wagon. All these tasks wait for compensating for something

WHAT A TOOL

JOHN INTINI on the sad, sorry life of Canadian Tire Guy

IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEE Tim (The Tool Man) Taylor lock the Canadian Tire Guy's ass, you're not alone. Canadian Tire's long-running ad campaign—starring the Ned Flanders of home improvement—seems directly aimed at middle-aged, middle-class suburban men who are desperate to keep their levers neatly trimmed and their minivans perfectly polished in a car crowd that already goes to Canadian Tire 18 times a month. Problem is,

it seems only everybody else's minivans.

The price of 30-minute pressure washers—their chevron accents of Canada's most hated ad campaign—has proven especially repulsive to bloggers. Every mention of them on the Web results in a storm of nasty posts written with a rage so visceral it's hard not to fear for the safety of Canadian Tire Guy's personal dignity. The line is as real as Canadian neighborhood noise, somebody would probably have a gun pointed his lips shut. But there he is on TV, showing his neighbors how to attach a set of MicroMixer Prosecco Fit's Turbo windshield wipers, or tightening a bolt with his trusty Mastercraft nut ratch. Or he's even sponsored waffles—a selection of waffles Canadian Tire guys and gals who've appeared in commercials also fall.

But how exactly are they making? What do we really know about this man in white

pressed plaid and seam-resistant khakis (he must be a preferred customer at Mark's Work Warehouse)? And what does he say about the state of the Canadian male?

Conversely, Canadian Tire officials and their Toronto-based ad agency don't want to talk about him. Ted Sweeney (the actor) reportedly has no interview clause in his contract—intensifying the mystery of this strange Canadian icon. All that is left open on the 30- and 60-second TV spots, which are like Saturday Night Live skits without the punch lines. Give yourself an hour or 30 of these ads in an afternoon and things start making sense. It's not a pretty picture. If Canadian Tire Guy is meant to be Dwyane, God help us.

The real impression is one of domestic bliss. He's in his wife's where he's never going to be or even rated his voice to have a son, a dog and a minivan. He also has a cottage

and a boat. Over the years, he's done a pretty job of glossing his wife's peppered (probably was the Timberlake cordless hedge trimmer). And he was always mowing. In the early days, Canadian Tire Guy kept pretty quiet about all of his gadgets. He and his wife would share in the joy of a LePage caulking gun or the Dutch Boy no-drip paint can, but they kept their repairs to themselves.

One can only imagine the scale of the later necessity that one day erupted into a full-scale identity crisis (the man probably one of those guys who was constantly well-shipped in the high school showers) and named him into an overcompensating house kit. All now, anyone working by his house gets his lip up for a Mastercraft public service announcement. Canadian Tire Guy looks out from his garage with that same look of superiority and propriety that defines the identity of his tool's life. It's wonderful he "fixed" didn't tell him that the other belt from a few weeks didn't have any electricity. He was probably getting back at Canadian Tire Guy for the tongue lashing he received for buying a smaller from Sears.

Meanwhile, Canadian Tire Guy has constructed his own accumulation of tools (it doesn't take a sex therapist to figure out what's going on there). When he first appeared several years ago, he pinched some pretty useful items. Who couldn't use the Mastercraft Fit? Sure, staple gun (no lock-bolt) or the Older 3-in-1 screw driver. But come on—what are most people going to

do with solar panels for a boat? And who could ever recommend that someone play hockey wearing skates with a dual that night on them, instead of regular laces?

When does Canadian Tire Guy do for a night? Every time he jumps in his car it seems he's simply wrong for his new Mastercraft push or heading off to Canadian Tire for another gadget (it's as if Canadian Tire kept a mailing list of all his needs to keep him from checking out Home Depot). He does have a lot of free time in the summer—he's probably a high school geography teacher.

He's definitely thrived. His wife has changed her hairstyle a couple of times, but the most noticeable transformation is her new hold attitude. For a long time, her domestic role was clearly defined. Occasionally, she'd head out of the house on her own—no further than the curb—to help a dumb old neighbor with a dead car battery. Usually, she stayed in, drying out her products like the master sewer kitchen drain or the "perfect for seniors" inflatable mattress that she's recently stopped up. Especially the time she stole the family's all-terrain

vehicle, leaving her husband and his badly looking even darker than usual, sporting aching back and goofy grin inside the shed. You can imagine Canadian Tire Guy's dragons when his wife heads out for a night with the girls and minivan she's got the mad driver in her pants.

In fact, she may be back and what have you got? There's no doubt that the type who always jumps for discounts when he's lost, and watches the sales every time he gets on an airplane. He's probably made many trips from home to work. And he's certainly more domestic than that ever. Recently, when he's pulled off the line all over the kitchen, Canadian Tire Guy sprinted to the closet to grab their brand new Shark vacuum cleaner (no one is, in fact, his wife didn't even know they owned it) to clean up the mess. He then ran every other room in the house, alternating powerful suction power.

And then there's his son, Bobby, who we've learned watched grow up between commercial breaks. It seemed his only way today (or he was a late summer) that Canadian Tire Guy and his wife were building

him a wooden dock with their Mastercraft toys on. Now, he's almost a teenager—and has become increasingly demanding. When he invited friends over to play in the family's inflatable pool, he's asked while his overly cautious parents are every thing up. Canadian Tire Guy's apparent indifference at his discipline has earned his son in his house who spends most of his time in the back seat of his parents' van playing video games or watching movies on their portable DVD player—especially on camping trips. (He's probably used to controlling his father's time, which, he's seen 49 times since he's 10, it's in the cheap bin at his favorite store.)

But who can blame the dad? Canadian Tire Guy always picks the worst weekend to camp. It rains pretty much every time the family heads to the bush. And to make matters worse, the family is always unprepared—having to use their inflatable beds in the tent when running between the car and the tent. As a result, the good in Canadian Tire would be a good investment. Although not clear from the ads, it's safe

to amaze Canadian Tire Guy like a good singalong. Soon in the camera turn-off, he probably grabs a guitar from the trunk and tortures his family with an extended version of *Stairway to Heaven* around the camp fire. He certainly seems the classic rock type—he has the Eagles and Eric Clapton. But for romance, he probably pulls out old Chris de Burgh tape from his underwear drawer (and obviously filled with ugly whorls) and lets Lady on Red take over. Too bad he plays it while cordlessly turning on his Shop-Vac.

He seems to be a caring husband and father just think back to that rainy night when his wife and son were on a road with a flat tire, and Canadian Tire Guy had thoughtfully left a spare tire near in the trunk and, more important, the Airman Tire repair kit. That sensitive or not, he's obviously alienated most of his extended family—except for a couple of nephews. One appears in a park-night effect a sound of golf, pushing over his uncle's new halogen headlights. Another shows up in the company's back to school ad, during which Canadian Tire Guy and his wife outfit his college dorm room with deluxe furniture that looks rich and bad. If Canadian Tire Guy is looking to win the "Voice of the Year Award," he should have shown up with a case of beer instead of a necktie that doubles as an estringer.

The rest of his relatives probably grew tired of receiving rechargeable battery kits and super-powered flashlights for Christmas, and wish in our family functions. As for his neighbors, chances are he's the guy who never gets invited to seven parties. Too bad, because Canadian Tire Guy could use a thick neck and a couple of cold ones, though he's probably misinterpreted his wife's figure into middle age by watching his red meat and wine drinking muscles, low-carb beer. (No more than two, though, lest he end up hanging off the roof from his seat belt.)

But Canadian Tire Guy's greatest indignity is still to come—likely, sooner rather than later—when he's kicked out of the male-believe neighborhood. The new batch of Canadian Tire handy-men seem to be taking over, and having to play second fiddle with building homes. It can't be easy even for a fictional character, to have a real life career play out on national TV. Maybe, in our last ditch effort to improve his situation, he'll try hanging out with a couple of Red Tire guys—especially if they promise to hang over their new Mastercraft laser saw.



WAS MY FACE RED!

Secrets from the diary of Canadian Tire Guy

DEAR DIARY,

What a surprise! While using my new \$2800 Gas Powered Pressure Washer, available at Canadian Tire, to brush my teeth this morning, I noticed that our next-door neighbors, the Johnsons, have a "For Sale" sign up—even though they've been here for less than a year.

I went over and asked Why they were moving and he said: "You, You and your obnoxious, know-it-all ramblings about cheap, piece-of-crap products no one needs!" Then he chased me off his property with a set of barbecue tongs. That's what I'm going to name his sense of humor!

Our other next-door neighbors are trying to sell their home, too. Come to think of it, to are the two families right across the road, including Bill and Carol, who been on the street for—wow, how long has it been now—almost 17 months! A new record! I really think they would have become our best friends in the whole wide world if it weren't for Bill's hectic work schedule. And the restraining order he filed against me.

Dear Diary,

What a morning it's been! I spent the last few hours from about 8:00 to 9:00 with my new \$800 wall Eliminator Power Inverter, with an advanced, easy-to-use digital display, available at Canadian Tire. It was so enjoyable and rewarding. Diary! I talked and talked and then hung on my every word. What a good day!

Dear Diary,

Being day. The highlight was going out to get the mail with my Mastercraft Tech II 2000 Mail Grabber and Motion Shaker, available at Canadian Tire, and finding a postcard. A good old-fashioned post card! "Dear Canadian Tire Guy," it began. "Please shut your nose hole. Seriously, all 32 million Canadians." It was nice of them to write. I put it upon the fridge.

Dear My Stupid Husband's Stupid Diary,

This is your wife writing. I just came up from the basement, where you are auditing the efficiency benefits of your new York Warble 12 amp Leaf Blower/Vacuum, available at Canadian Tire, to your new friend Bob, whom I very much enjoyed meeting, even though he is actually a piece of plywood with a smiley face drawn on it. Gosh, you are such a loser!

Dear Diary,

What a night. I barely know where to begin. Even with the snow gone, I was determined to host our annual neighborhood Christmas party. The show must go on! And let me tell you—it was going really well. Attendance was roughly the same as usual—about—but then there was a thrilling moment when I heard a lot of a battle out on the porch. Grabbing my Mastercraft Pressure Wash 1000 Vacuum Dispenser and Do-It-Yourself Circumcision Kit, available at Canadian Tire, I flung open the door to find the young Stinkies girl from down the street straffing a flyer into our mailbox.

In the spirit of the season, I invited her in for some egg nog. Naturally she began to flee, but I caught her with my Mastercraft Gator-Grip Lasso and Taser, available at Canadian Tire. Anyway, long story short—turn out confining people against their will is illegal. Guess I should have read the fine print on those instructions! You can imagine how red my face was when—Gosh, gotta go! Time for my underwear!

Dear Diary,

What a surprise! I woke up this morning to discover I have yet another new altitude. At breakfast, I went over and asked Murphy why he had asked for a master and he said: "You, You and your obnoxious, know-it-all ramblings about cheap, piece-of-crap products no one needs!" Then he chased me through the main hall with a shiv. That's what I'm going to name his sense of humor!

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FEARS OF A CLOWN

Why men are scared off by funny women

IN LATE NOVEMBER, *Women Fully Clothed*, an all-female sketch comedy show led by Saturday Night Liveer SCTV alumna Bobe Dam, will begin its second run at Toronto's Winter Garden Theatre. When it shows premieres last spring, critics raved. Eugene Levy called Dam and her fellow performers "the funniest women in Canada." But despite the accolades, one thing eluded the production: a male audience. "Because we're five

women, people tend to think our show is about men-hating," Duke laughs. "I guess they're afraid we're going to make fun of them or emasculate them somehow."

Long before Roseanne Barr made a million-dollar career out of berating her TV husband and dealing with her smooth operator, men have had a complicated relationship with women who joke. And not just the ones on stage. There's thought to be something off-putting about a woman who jodels for laughs, and who tries to dominate a conversation—let alone a room—by the force of her wit and personality. Parody, it's a cultural tension, the by-product of centuries of rigid gender roles. In the early '80s, says Duke, the prevailing view on the set of SNL was that women just weren't funny, with the result that they served merely as foil against which the men could display their comical acumen. "For a long time we were just playing broken," she says. "More recently, however, psychologists have suggested that men's discomfort with funny women may have less to do with ran-of-the-mill chauvinism and more to do with biology."

In recent studies, men and women are in complete agreement that, when it comes to choosing a romantic partner, a good sense of humor is crucial. The men are in how the two genders define this quality. According to a new McMaster University study, a typical woman believes a good sense of humor is the ability to "generate" high quality humor (i.e. to make her laugh). Conversely, the average man defines a woman's ability to "appreciate" his particular brand of humor (i.e. to laugh at his jokes). "We found that men don't see (all) about women's humor production," says psychology professor Sigal Shitka, a co-author of the study. Psychologist Geoffrey Miller of the Uni-



The comedy troupe *Women Fully Clothed*: women of emasculation

versity of New Mexico believes that, in evolutionary terms, humor is attractive to women because it requires a set of cognitive skills—intelligence, confidence, creativity—that signifies superior genes. As such, in good old Darwinian fashion, men are just constantly comparing among themselves for the title of funniest guy, particularly when there are pretty women around to impress. "A lot of humor is a what psychologists call 'dominance of competitors,'" says Miller. "It's about making fun of others who may be after the same mate."

Take the film *8 Mile*, starring Eminem. "It's all about the creative display of your sexual rivalry through spoken word," Miller says. "The women in the audience like to pay attention to guys doing that because it's a powerful cue of dominance and prestige."

However, he says, the opposite scenario wouldn't work. If a woman was to get up on stage and say, "Being funny is such a pain," a male audience would generally respond poorly to the cur-criticism—and usually rather favorably to Spears.

A woman who possesses a typically male sense of humor (one that is cutting or condescending) can be seen off—and not only because she may outperform a man on his own turf. She will also come across as a woman who wouldn't be easily seduced or impressed. "From a guy's point of view," he says, "one problem with a seriously confident, witty woman is that she may have a

higher 'mate value' than him. Even if he could get her interested, he might worry that it would be extremely easy for her to dump him, have affairs, or switch to a better guy later on."

On the other hand, a woman who is not particularly witty, but who responds accordingly to a man's jokes, is appealing—at least in the short term—because she seems available. In 1999, German psychologists Karl Grammer and Ingeborg Wild-Boddy claimed that young men and women engaging in spontaneous conversations and found that the more the woman laughed aloud, the more likely she was to be sexually interested in the male counterpart—and the more likely he was to be interested in her. But the frequency of the woman's laughter had no impact either way.

Which is perhaps why women have been found to laugh roughly 126 per cent more often than men—and why men would like it to stay that way.

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Carson Kress, Maclean's

Austin, the name of Terry Mesher's daughter, is the man or place he has used for over 10 years as the editorial page cartoonist. He has appeared on eleven shows of the Ellen Show with Ellen Degeneres, The Tonight Show with Jay Leno and the Late Show on CBS. Cullen has many television comedy specials under his belt and is a two-time Emmy Award winner. This past summer Cullen launched his own webcast audio show entitled simply *Seán* on CBC Radio 1.

GUESTS



SEÁN CULLEN

Anchor, Comedian, Maclean's

Seán Cullen's humor is a blend of astute observations, irreverent wit and occasionally raucous and loved musical puns. He has appeared on eleven shows of the Ellen Show with Ellen Degeneres, The Tonight Show with Jay Leno and the Late Show on CBS. Cullen has many television comedy specials under his belt and is a two-time Emmy Award winner. This past summer Cullen launched his own webcast audio show entitled simply *Seán* on CBC Radio 1.



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SCOTT THOMPSON

Actor, Comedian, Television Host

Well known in films as a member of Canada's famed comedy troupe The Kids in the Hall and for his stint on The Larry Sanders Show, Scott Thompson is anything but your average comic talent. Thompson is currently filming his hilarious play dealing with death to television and stage TV at the United States. Some say Thompson is a shining example of a Canadian-born actor in Hollywood. His 2004 Comedy Award performance entitled *The Kevorkian Act* (The "Bully Show" meets *Alfred Hitchcock*)

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MACLEAN'S 100



NO GREATER LOVE

Why hazing 'victims' are also often proud survivors

LAST WEEK, McGill University shut down its football program for the remainder of the season after a hazing incident in which rookies were subjected to an initiation rite known as "Dr. Brown." And junior hockey's Windsor Spitfires use their coach and general manager suspended after a rookie was allegedly punished for refusing to go through the initiation rite of "ice-buzzing" being merited, raked, into the team bath's icy water/cooler, along with other new players.

This isn't the first time you've read about hazing, and it won't be the last. Despite endless attempts to stamp it out, it always seems to reappear. Why? Because even if hazing those who practice themselves seem to find that there's something noble, and even necessary, about them.

Consider hazing's long history: June 2000: Baseball players Ichiro Suzuki, Ryan Franklin and Jon Niese, rookies with the Seattle Mariners, fly with their team from Baltimore to Seattle—while dressed as Hooters girls. Suzuki said that he got such a look out of the initiation ritual he wore the outfit home to meet his wife. Other teams have similar unofficial rules: NHL star Anton Carter told the Boston Globe that when he played at Michigan State University, rookies had to rollerblade around campus while wearing women's clothes. "Nobody gets hurt by it," he said. "Nobody's in the hospital. It's just a way of proving chemistry."

August 2008: Anecdotes hold that 70 per cent of college athletes surveyed in the United States have been subjected to what the study defines as hazing. In only 12 per cent of the athletes who went through was hazing. The study, funded by New York's Alfred University, says hazing is "any humiliating activity, regardless of your willingness to participate."

October 2, 1999: At a University of Vermont hockey team party, rookies have their gear and gear performed naked and go over glasses of warm beer, into which they dip their private parts, and do the "elephant walk," parading while holding the genitals of the

man ahead of them. One freshman complained and stood, the team was suspended for the season. But several rookies told the media they weren't traumatized by what happened, and that it brought the players closer together. Ryan Langston, a Canadian on the team, told *Maclean's* at the time: "This is pretty much what we do in Canada. There, it's no big deal."

January 1997: *Detour* (NBC) aired video of a U.S. Marine Corps "blood painting," in which Marines who carried their gold wings for 30 successful parachute jumps had the initials poured into their chests by sergeants. The initiators groined and cried out as the paint went into their chests, but at the end of the ceremony, with blood on their faces, they embraced their comrades and instructors.

January 1995: An amateur video of a Canadian Airborne Regiment hazing ritual comes to light, showing drunken soldiers eating food and vomit. Coming on the heels of revelations of abuse by the regiment in Somalia, the government decided to disband the Airborne. Later, another video shows soldiers subjecting themselves to electric shocks. Maj. Gen. Brian Vernon told the *Globe and Mail* that, in this second video, the men were testing their pain tolerance, and this was "mild hazing" that should not be discouraged in a fighting unit.

490 B.C., Sparta, Ancient Greece: At an early age, boys are removed from their families to be raised as a group, in preparation for a lifetime as soldiers in antiquity's most feared army. Among the activities is roughing them up as an ordeal known as *paideia*, a custom to use who could go

down the most severe flogging. "Turns out Theron to Myrtle Leaf's coach Qui Quin was right when he said, 'I guess hazing's been around since Plato's time, probably. I don't have any particular answer for it.'"

HERE'S SOMETHING worth pondering: why are hazing's victims often eager to go through it? Why don't most of them feel like victims?

One thing to keep in mind is that hazing isn't the same as bullying. When someone is bullied, he's being reminded that he's an outsider and an underdog, and always will be. It's a relentless humiliation, for the benefit of the people doing the humiliating. As anyone who's ever been picked on knows, the weaker party gets nothing out of the exchange.

Hazing is also a ritual of brotherhood and subjugation. Sometimes it's nothing more than bullying, or worse. To take one harmful example, Illinois' first military prosecutor reported that in the first half of 2004, 25 Illinois soldiers were killed in hazing incidents, while another 60 were driven to suicide.

But hazing usually aims at something other than humiliating subject and keeping him out of the group. Instead, it's a ritual used to remind him of his inherent, noble status—while

admitting he was the group. That's why, unlike bullying, hazing usually involves some degree of consent, and both parties often claim that, however awkward it looks to outsiders, it helped them grow closer as a team.

We live in a liberal society, built around the primacy of rights and individual choice. But there are places in our society that are run in part on a whole other set of pre-modern ideals. It's not for nothing that hazing is a military tradition, adopted by sports teams, fraternities, gangs and organized crime. You're not interviewing the team to see if it suits your needs, it's testing you. And it is testing you because even if it may need to ask you to sacrifice yourself for it, maybe even by down your life.

That's just not part of the arrangement when you sign up to do some 9-to-5 as a courtier at Acme & Co. You aren't going to be asked to run into a burning building, or assault enemy trenches, or drop the gloves against the toughest guy at a crosswalk, or, in order to raise Acme & Co.'s quarterly earnings by half a cent per share.

But what if you're a member of a junior hockey team? Hazing, when it isn't just mindless bullying, is trying to reinforce the values of the organization. Duty, hierarchy

and inferiority of the individual to the group. Most of us would like to work for a company based on those principles. But the military runs on those principles, and has to, and to some extent so do sports teams.

There are obviously good arguments against hazing. Even when it doesn't go out of hand, it often backfires, and even *divides*. There are better ways to build team spirit. But psychologists generally recognize that hazing has deep roots, and must be replaced with something, as one sports psychologist told the *Montreal Gazette*: To put it ahead of love? Basically, it's worth the answer to a question that's never asked: would you want to be a hazing victim?

But the power of hazing—and the world pleases that even its recipients often take from it—may come from the fact that it is magic, dangerous and humiliating. It's discovery, and so embarrassing that it must be kept secret, that too can be part of its power and appeal. Shared secrets bind. They create intimacy.

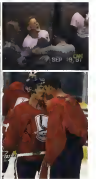
Intimacy? Notice how many of the hazing incidents listed above have a sexual subtext to them, involving hyper-masculine organizations coping with gender hazing

that would not be out of place on Church Street during Toronto's Gay Pride Day. And yet you average, heterosexual, middle-aged hockey player, if asked whether he'd like to stand in a room naked with a bunch of other guys and gabber/pornies, would probably tell you that the idea repulsed him. Maybe that's why it's a hazing ritual.

The team wants to remind you that you are smaller than it, and inferior to the established players. But it also wants to find out just how badly you want in. Are you really willing to abandon yourself? To put it ahead of love? Basically, it's worth the answer to a question that's never asked: would you want to be a hazing victim?

One way to find out is to ask pledges to engage in activities they find repulsive. Just as courtly love sets the knight proving his love for the woman through sacrifice, so hazing involves sacrificing something the initiate holds dear—for example, his masculinity, for an evening—to prove his devotion to the team. And that may also be a way to demonstrate his submission (and through the more primal, not amiable, naturally mockingly humiliating to the senior members of the team).

Proud would have a field day



Left to right: Winnipeg Blue Bombers rookie in 2007; Prisoners in 1992 (top); U.S. Marines' blood painting; Windsor Spitfires star Steve Dowson and Allen Alta, who refused to submit to a hazing ritual

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He sees only quibbles between the possible and the impossible

Steve Gupta exudes the confidence of a high-wire acrobat without a safety net

WHEN HE WAS GROWING UP in Patiala, a modest provincial city in the Punjab, Suresh (Steve) Gupta topped his dad in math and English, but he loved for his dreams. They included the usual youthful fantasies about having one big monster of a car, but he spent many more nights visualizing the luxury houses he was determined someday to build and own. "Even in my school days, I always felt I wanted to do something different," he recalls. "In Grade 11, I was thinking I'd have a big house, a few hundred employees who walk into my office and say, 'Good morning! Good morning!' That's the kind of vision I had. People said, 'Are you stupid? It's not going to happen!'"

In 1971, at age 22, Steve Gupta arrived in Canada with \$100 in his pocket. Now, his dreams have come true with a vengeance—except that instead of having that one house he dreamed about (he drives a silver \$5,500 Mercedes), he owns five other luxury automobiles,

including three Lexuses, another Mercedes, plus a BMW.

His first major purchase in Canada was a four-year-old Toyota for \$1,100. "I was driving around with my wife, and said, 'One of these days, we're going to buy a house over here, on the Briele Puffs.' All I knew was that it was filled with beautiful houses with big lots, and I didn't know how much they cost." He now owns a 16,500-sq.-foot palace on that avenue of international mansions. His magnificent, curved structure, where he lives with his wife, Rashmi, and their children Ramea, Iketa, Shelly, and Sonu, is modelled on the maharaja's palace in his hometown. It's crisscrossed with baroque furniture, acres of marble, gold gilt everywhere, an indoor swimming pool and an art gallery. Included is a full-scale basement theatre where he holds his Bollywood hits in his best unassuming guise.

And the heads of his dreams? Gupta owns six in all around Toronto with 80 per cent plus occupancy rates. Three more are under construction, and half a dozen others are completed in Ontario. When all are running five years from now, the value of his private holdings will top \$500 million. He has no partners or shareholders, so all the profits will be his.

Gupta's record in Canada is easily summed up: he has squandered 100 years of productive effort in not quite three decades. His astonishing success is based not on genius, intuition or any special access to money or opportunity. Observing him at home and at work, I concluded that his greatest asset is a muscular enthusiasm that compels everyone he meets—mainstream or an insider, or dur-

ing, prominent or elite line thousands with dozens of doubting hangers.

Rashmi sums him up best: "When we arrived in Canada, we lived in a small rented apartment. At that time, my husband always said, 'One day, we will own this apartment building.' Shocked, I replied, 'We don't have enough money to pay our rent, how will we run age up own this building?' Eventually, we not only bought that building, but many others. Whenever my husband puts his mind to something, he doesn't allow any difficulties along the way to stop him from fulfilling his dreams."

At 56, Gupta projects the confidence of a high-wire acrobat who has never heard of safety nets. Of all the New-Canadian Establishment members profiled in this series, he is the most self-possessed one of those rare people who recognize only negotiable quibbles between the possible and the impossible. He is the ultimate master of the leveraged buyout, not in the classical sense that he purchases other companies with their own money, but in the much riskier context that he bids on large projects without having the cash, or knowing where he'll get it.

"One day in 1978, I saw an ad in the *Toronto Star*, that if you wanted to buy a service station, you needed only \$15,000 down," he recalls, citing a typical deal. "So I called this guy but he had nothing to sell. He told me that the \$15,000 station was gone, but wanted to know how much

At breakfast with his wife, Rashmi, in their home on Toronto's Briele Puffs, a house modelled on the maharaja's palace in his Indian hometown



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ARE AIDS REAL?

If we're to 'solve' the suffering in Africa, we need to know the truth

LAST WEEK, George R. Bush had a working lunch with rock star Bono. They discussed the debt, AIDS, markets and world trade. Whatever. Senators Joseph Biden and Richard Lugar had done even better. They got Angelina Jolie. The UN's goodwill ambassador for refugees was in town for the Sept. 28 Global Business Conference on HIV/AIDS, where "initiatives" for ending Third World poverty were debated. "I don't have an answer," Max Baie (annual income: three trillion) said modestly, "but it's hard for me to accept we can't do it."

With business, humanism, celebrities and the much anticipated arrival of the president

claiming government attention, the AIDS lobby is concerned they will get left behind. Living with the disease in Georgetown, D.C., is nightmare enough. Millions of men and women with flies crawling across the already festering eyes and feet of their "lovers" can only be compared to Dante's seventh circle.

AIDS and AIDS are a mystery. You pour money in and money goes worse. For 23 years or so, this epidemic has been swallowing families, nations and nations and only getting bigger. Why didn't we see any convincing evidence that Africans are more sexually promiscuous than the sexually promiscuous West? They don't have more teen-agers, probably fewer. They may not have had condoms and safe sex education 20 years ago, but once the pandemic was announced, the balls were alive with the sound of Tropicana.

A few people here and in Africa—scientists, journalists and observers—think it is because the statistics and the media reporting are false. AIDS in the sub-Sahara may not be as big a killer as it is made out to be. The *American Spectator's* Tom Bethell has been banging this drum, and on the face of it he makes a lot of sense. I want to know, because you can't help Africa until you have a proper diagnosis.

Bethell once wrote (referred): The World Health Organization organized a meeting in Bangui, Central African Republic, in 1985. At that meeting, the rules for diagnosing AIDS in Africa were established. Tick off two of the following major signs: weight loss of at least 10 per cent, a month's worth of chronic diarrhea or fever and add in just

one minor sign such as a history of herpes sores, genital ulcers, skin rashes, chronic progressive or disseminated herpes virus infection. No HIV test needed.

One assumes that this methodology was used because it was impossible in 1985 to get HIV testing done in any meaningful way. Twenty years later, the only systematic HIV testing in Africa is done at prenatal clinics on pregnant women, which probably accounts for why scientists thought HIV spreading among women. In fact, since the biological disease endemic in Africa can cause "false positives," these statistics aren't that helpful.

To bolster his case, Bethell cites the population figures of sub-Saharan Africa, where millions are estimated to be dying from

Western capitalist practices, I suppose. Meanwhile, pandemics in the Third World are building blocks for expanding public-health budgets at agencies like the World Health Organization. And, hell, it can't hurt to chin-wag with Angelina.

If you like pessimism, it is academic whether you die of AIDS or any one of the diseases that mimic many of its symptoms and are caused by drinking foul water. If you are donating money for humanitarian reasons, you want to save lives, not worry about diagnostic errors. Anyway, there's no doubt that AIDS is very much present in Africa. But if, like Bono, Bob Geldof, Angelina, all the senators, politicians, governments, churches and me—you have a genuine intention to "solve" the problem of suffering in that highest continent, you need to know the truth.

Possibly the explanations are straightforward. Population growth in Africa may be due to hidden or unexpected factors. Possibly the truth is that African AIDS cases are considerably fewer than reported. Just why I could say, except to note that the UN, and its agencies like the WHO and UNAIDS, have easily found a hardwagon they didn't drop on and no issue they didn't discuss. Orphans, for example, are commonly defined as children who have lost both parents. In what seems to be a UNAIDS affirmative orphanhood program, an African AIDS orphan is anyone under 18 who has lost one parent.

African governments are almost exclusively loathsome corrupt rulers fostering disease and death. Still, self-government is better than good government, and you can't justify any system but self-government—even one that saves more lives. But truth, whether about Africa or AIDS, is a precious commodity in itself. Moonbaying with it, deliberately or negligently, as Angelina, Bono and Co. will occasionally find, it is not going to give them any "holiness" at all. ☐

PANDEMICS in the Third World are building blocks for expanding public-health budgets at agencies like WHO. And it can't hurt to chin-wag with Angelina.



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NOW HERE'S A LOUSY JOB

Professional nitpicker Dawn Mucci visits the finest of families

"WANT HEAD LICE GONE?" ask the large magnets attached to the doors of Dawn Mucci's minivan. "No pesticides used. Fast and confidential services."

One day last week, she paid off the magnets and tossed them into the back seat before driving to an in-home appointment in Toronto, explaining, "No one really wants the neighbours to know they have lice." Mucci, the founder and director of the Lice Squad, is Canada's premier nitpicker: her cellphone rings merrily every five minutes or so. "It's pretty busy right now in Toronto," she sighs. "Forty to 50 calls a day."

A former garbage truck driver and certified seamstress in pain, Mucci has sold 12 Lice Squad franchises in Ontario and crisscrosses a national empire. "This morning I heard from a lady in Montreal: 48 out of 158 private school students were sent home with lice. And then there's the West End urban centre too!" New franchises cost about \$25,000, but she estimates that between home visits and school checks, a busy nitpicker can make \$50,000 a year. Mucci herself charges \$55 an hour.

Yet money isn't why she loves her job. "I like being able to help. Most of the people who call have been struggling for months, and have tried five or so over-the-counter treatments. It's not the plague, or bird flu. But a bummer. Oxytocin! People are generally very happy to receive," she says, stopping in front of a tidy brick house where a man waited anxiously on the front lawn. "That'll be the deal."

The dad greeted her with the reverential manner of gratitude and desperation usually reserved for a top surgeon, cautioning that the atmosphere in the house was, well, "stressful. My wife is going a little crazy."

Mucci, a willowy 35-year-old with long, sandy blond hair, matched in with a large black rolling suitcase and surveyed the scene. Two little boys, one with a ravenly shaved head, one cross-legged on furniture covered in bedbugs, while their mother perched sedately in the bare floor. "We've killed up all our rugs. I'm doing laundry night and day and picking through everyone's hair one strand at a time. Then I find a bug on my pillow," she said. "I can't stop crying."

The woman continued sobbing. "It was the



daycare, they let the kid who started it come back after one day!—as Mucci strapped on a magnifying visor and headlamp, covered the dining room table with clean towels and rows of sterile hairpieces, and turned two bright lamps on the scalp of the child who had recently been relieved of most of his hair.

With a thin bamboo stick of the sort used for kebabs, Mucci tilted up small sections of the matted hair and peered at them. "The key is eliminating not just the bugs but the nits. Start at the hair spots, the edge of the scalp and around the ears," she instructed, then ran an electric comb through the child's hair. "If it stops humming, it's killed a louse," she said, drive pronounced here bug free.

"See, here?" You did a great job!" the man told his wife, nearly dancing off to work after Mucci checked him and gently noted that while he did not have lice, he might

went to attract on some dishevelled strongbox. After the woman was also cleared, she stood with Mucci's neatly labelled samples of nits and lice in plastic sandwich bags, and asked, "Where did lice originate, anyway?"

"There were lice comb in Cleopatra's wash," said Mucci, suggesting the older boy's head, "and there is a nit!" That it was too tiny, and too close to his hair's shade of brown—"Nits are not white, like most people think," she said—for anyone else to detect.

Mucci massaged a Wood of Nettlebers Secret Concentrate and hairy conditioner into the boy's scalp, covered his head with a shower cap for five minutes, then combed out the mixture with an exceedingly fine toothed Nit-Free Terminator—"I usually comb that works without saving the hair"—sopping every 30 seconds to wipe it on a clean paper towel and repeat the dry-brush process. "About 60," she decided.

"Each one could hatch a bug!" the mother asked. "Thank God you're here." When all the nits were gone and the mother had detailed follow-up instructions—and had decided to purchase a comb and the secret process—Mucci hit the road again.

"That was mild," she shrugged. "Often we use 18 to 25 live bugs and more than 100 nits. I've treated everyone from a four-month-old baby to an 88-year-old grandmother," including the victims of some famous families. "There shouldn't be such a stigma attached to this," she said. "Look, I was the kid who got sent home all the time with lice. My father used to rip my hair out with the comb, scream. I had particles pinned on my head..." She stopped to compose herself. "It's just, no child has to go through what I went through."

Then Dawn Mucci headed north for the next nitpick, quite unconcerned about the risk to her own head. "In five years, I think only one of my magnets has ever caught lice," she said before waving goodbye. "We're careful, and we avoid head-to-head contact with our customers. Obviously." □



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'ATOP THE CORPSES OF MILLIONS'

Mao killed more people than Hitler or Stalin

AS THE EXTRAORDINARY economic miracle of post-Mao China continues to grip the world, prompting either dreams of an old China or "yellow peril" nightmares as the West, a brilliant but devastating race biography of Chairman Mao Tse-tung has been unveiled. ("published" seems too tame a word) to make sure the world understands something it doesn't really want to absorb. That something is the terrible truth that the current Communist regime is constructed atop the corpses of millions of victims and a half-century of massive, unrelenting persecution that is almost impossible for any one to grasp fully—indeed many of the Chinese people themselves. It's as if the story of the Soviet Union was still served up with



Mao calmed the masses in 1968, but he refused to visit his mother on her deathbed

HIS FAVOURITE BATTLE tactic was the human wave—simply sending young men over the hill, regardless of the cost

Mao. The US *Journal* story by Jung Chang, the widow of the international broadcaster Wild Swans, and her husband, Jan Haliday, transcends every other attempt ever made to tell the story of the leader of New China. It does this through impeccable archival research—extensively documented in nearly 130 pages of reference notes—spread over 30 years, and replete with interviews with hundreds of witnesses and key observers inside China and around the world.

It's about time, too. Of the three dominant masters of the 20th century, Mao has always fared disproportionately better than Hitler or Stalin. There are many reasons for this, chief of which remains the fact

that his primary legacy, the Communist Party of China, still rules over the most populous nation in the history of the world (now estimated to be around 1.3 billion). Consequently, the party has a huge stake in modernising any defamiation of Mao's record.

At the same time, it has long been a curious phenomenon that many Western observers, from professional China-watchers to well-wishing visitors (everyone from Perry Bracken to actress Shirley Maclaine), have always exempted Mao from the kind of despot oppression handed out to the Franco and Pol Pot of the world. This traditional ignorance is not just a small thing; it's

like Andy Warhol turning his Asian or Hitler into a pop art icon: the world would have howled. But in smart apartments in Upper Manhattan and the salons of Rosedale, a psychopathic persecutor of nearly 100 millions, deadly political campaigns and at least three completely unnecessary wars are right up there with some artwork subjects like Che and Marilyn Monroe.

Jung Chang, who was born in Sichuan province in 1952 and came to the West only in 1978 (where she did a doctorate in England), lived off her formative days within the deadly Maoist experiment. (She the mother his daughter when Mao launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966 and urged the youth of China to rise up and rebel against their parents and teachers, he knew more than enough about human psychology to bet on the appeal this would

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If you had to take a stab at how many people in the world are blind or suffer severe vision impairment, would you guess 20 million people? 60 million? 90 million? What about the number of people who will develop irreversible vision loss in Canada, would you guess one in 100? One in 50? One in 10?

Most of us take our sight for granted. As long as we can see reasonably well without too many headaches, there's not much need to worry. Maybe we would worry if we actually knew the facts: globally, there are 180 million people who are blind or suffer severe vision impairment. Here in Canada, one in nine of us will develop irreversible vision loss by the time we hit age 65.

Eye-care professionals want to get the message out that as much as 80 per cent of that damage could be prevented. So they join forces every second Thursday in October, for World Sight Day. Their objective: to draw attention to the issues of global blindness, to ask why we live in a world where a child goes blind every minute, and to let people know that every five seconds one person goes blind in our world.



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Your Eyes Deserve an Optometrist

Ken Prue knows what it's like to be a part of those horrific statistics. Blithely moving through life, he had no idea he was about to brush up against the harsh realities of eye disease.

When Prue's optometrist recommended a visual field test, it was to create a benchmark to measure how his eyes were doing over the long term. It was strictly routine. "I cancelled my first appointment because I was just too busy," said Prue. "I eventually rescheduled the test because my mother, who has glaucoma, wouldn't let it go. She just kept nagging me." Lucky for Prue his mother was so persistent. The test turned up the early signs of narrow angle glaucoma, an eye disease that could, without warning, have resulted in irreversible damage to his retina, which could ultimately have led to blindness. "I was lucky," says Prue, shaking his head at the thought of what might have been. "After laser surgery, I was given a clean bill of health with the proviso that I have six-month checkups to monitor my eyes." And how does he feel after his narrow escape? "Relieved," he smiled and then added, "thanks Mom."

The benefits of an internal eye exam don't stop with diseases of the eye. Ocular signs that signal diabetes and high blood pressure are often spotted in routine internal eye exams. "Patients on certain medications, like those being treated for arthritis, need to have their eyes checked regularly," says Dr. Linton. "Medications can cause problems or can create changes in the retina." Your eyes are nothing to mess around with.

If Ken Prue hadn't been seeing an optometrist regularly, if he hadn't been sent for that visual field test as a routine precaution, the worst could have happened visually without warning. Dr. Lillian Linton, Chair of the National Public Education Committee for the Canadian Association of Optometrists, says that most people think that if they don't have a problem seeing then they don't need to go to an optometrist. "You can have 20/20 acuity and still have a problem," says Dr. Linton. And she has the stories to tell to prove her point. There was the young man who had no visual problems, whose optic nerve head was swollen. "You'd never see that without looking inside his eye." There was the woman with a retinal tear. "There were no warning signs, but it could have ended up in a retinal detachment." And there was the patient with macular degeneration, which is like a blister on the retina that causes blindness. In each of these cases, it would have been impossible to tell there was a problem without an eye examination. And yet Canadians seem downright reluctant about having their eyes checked.

If your eyes are itchy and scratchy, don't reach for just any drops. Some have the potential to raise the pressure in your eyes. So if you have a family history or predisposition to glaucoma, avoid the ingredient Naphazoline Hydrochloride (the antihistamine decongestant for red eye).

Blinded by Our Ignorance

A recent Ipsos-Reid survey, on behalf of the Canadian Association of Optometrists, revealed 76 per cent of Canadians rated their ability to see as more important than their ability to walk (14%), talk (6%) or hear (3%). Yet only 35 per cent say they have their eyes checked at least once a year. Sadly, more of us have our vehicles and furnaces serviced annually than have a yearly check-up on our eyes. When considering from a long list of possible expenditures that on-line Canadians would be willing to pay around \$100 for, if they had to pay for it themselves, many choose "dinner for two at a nice restaurant" (58%) or "tickets for a concert" (45%) than "a general eye-health examination from an optometrist" (30%).

So why are we apathetic when it comes to our eyes? "People don't do anything unless there is a problem," says Dr. Linton, who is passionate about making the point that there can be a problem without a person realizing it. By then it could be too late to fix it. "People aren't well informed so they don't know the implications of not having regular eye examinations."

She's particularly vocal when it comes to children's vision. "Parents think they'd know if their child had a problem." Not necessarily so. "I had a young parent who was being screened through the public health system. She wouldn't cooperate so her mother, who is a regular patient, brought her to see me." It turned out that the child had a lazy eye and couldn't see properly. "I expect to have her vision back to 20/20 using patching and glasses," says Dr. Linton triumphantly. Clearly it's not just about testing to see if someone can read the letters on a chart. A thorough eye exam requires the experience of a professional and the specific tools optometrists use to see inside the eye.



While Dr. Linton stresses that everyone should have their eyes checked on a regular basis (see sidebar), there are signs to watch for that may indicate a problem:

- your child doesn't like to read
- ☐ she isn't doing well in school
- there's been a change in his grades
- you find you need more light to read
- ☐ you have a hard time seeing road signs at night
- you avoid driving at night
- ☐ you work on a computer all day and have dry eyes
- your eyes water a lot
- your eyes feel gravelly
- ☐ have a lot of "sleep" in your eyes

How often should you visit your optometrist?

Preschool (birth to 5 years): Immediately, if parents sense a problem. Otherwise, by age 5 and again prior to entering school.

School age (6 to 19 years): Annually or every two years

Adult (20 to 64 years): Every two years

Older adult (65 to 69 years): Every one to two years

Senior (70 years and older): Annually

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Vision Correction

Contact lenses have become commonplace. "They are everywhere now," says Dr. Mina Acs, past president of the Ontario Association of Optometrists. Despite our familiarity with contact lenses — or because of it — we're making some significant mistakes taking care of them, and of our eyes.

Since we pop our lenses in and out with little thought, we may not be conscious of the fact that we're putting a foreign object — a piece of plastic — onto our eyes. "Things can go wrong," says Dr. Acs, whose mantra is "When in doubt, take the lenses out." When they are working well, your eyes should be clear, you should have no discharge or funny feelings in your eyes, and you should be able to see well. "If you think there is something wrong," says Dr. Acs, "there probably is."

She emphasizes that contact lens are absorbent and will react to too much dust, pollution, or smoke in the air. If you're flying and your eyes are scratchy, take your lenses out. Airplane cabins are notoriously dry and that's bad for your eyes. If you're in a swimming pool and you can smell chlorine, take your lenses out. If you don't, you may be exposing your lenses, and your eyes, to bacterial growth.

Lens wearers should have a pair of glasses as a backup. If you over-wear your contacts, or wear them when there is a problem, you could end up with a corneal ulcer. "You may never be able to wear lenses again," warns Dr. Acs. "Use your common sense, store them properly, keep them clean and see your eye doctor so you can make sure they aren't causing damage."

It's amusing the things that some people will do with their contact lenses, giving very little thought to the implications for their eyes. Teenagers think nothing of trying on a friend's lenses, to see how they feel or to see how coloured lenses look, with no thought to the germs they may be sharing. And people who drop a rigid lens often pop it into their mouths for a quick rinse before sticking it back into their eye. "The five-second rule does not apply to contact lenses," laughs Dr. Acs, "and don't rinse them in your mouth. Your mouth is a haven for germs and bacteria."

Your glasses also need to be cleaned regularly since the outside environment is attracted to your lenses. When cleaning the lenses in your glasses, do it at the kitchen sink, rinsing your glasses under warm running water and using a mild solution of water and dishwashing soap. Don't use antibacterial soap since the antibacterial ingredient can coat the lenses. Dry them with a soft cloth, paper towel or tissue (sans moisturizer) or use a microfibre cloth. What about those handy-dandy lens sprays? Dr. Acs suggests you be cautious with the sprays. "They can take the coating off your glasses. And, unless you rinse the grit off, you end up scratching your lens as you move the grit around."

At least once a year have screws tightened, replace nose-pads, and have your glasses checked so they're sitting properly on your face. "If they are off-kilter, if the angle is off, it'll affect your vision. Have them realigned and you'll see better," says Dr. Acs, who points out that most of this is done at no charge.



The Sun and Your Eyes

Winter is coming, but that doesn't mean you should store your sunglasses with your bathing suit. For the majority of us, the sun rises and sets 365 days a year. Much has been written about sun exposure and how important it is to slather on the SPF protection. But since our eyes don't feel the burn, we could be setting ourselves up for future problems if we don't wear sunglasses when we should.

Sun exposure means a significant increase in the risk of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration — the leading cause of blindness for people over the age of 65 in North America. Exposure to UV radiation is cumulative over a lifetime and not only reaches the eye directly, but reflects from water, sand and snow. So during those high noon hours, make sure you have on sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat. And if you wear contact lenses, don't think that because your lenses have UV protection you don't need glasses. Since your lenses don't cover your whole eye you're still at risk, so cover up, recommends Dr. Acs.

While virtually every corner store now sells sunglasses, you're doing your eyes no good at all if you buy an ineffective pair. Want a quick check to see if your sunglasses are likely to give you a headache? Look at a straight line of some kind, the corner of a wall, a long ruler held up by a friend. If the straight edge warps, the lenses are going to cause you problems. Some of the distortions are very subtle, so if you do end up with a headache, it could very well be those new sunglasses.

Sunglasses Primer

- Price isn't an indicator of the quality of sunglasses
- Look for a UV filter label
- Quality lenses that are optically ground are best
- Look for frames that are properly fitted
- Check for image distortion
- Ask your optometrist

Get Your Eyes Checked

If you haven't had your eyes checked in the past 24 months, it's time to call and make an appointment with an optometrist. Don't have one of your own? Check out the Canadian Association of Optometrists website at www.copto.ca for help in finding one. "We can't prevent everything, but if we detect a problem early enough, we can make a difference," says Dr. Linton. So what are you waiting for? When was the last time you had your eyes checked?

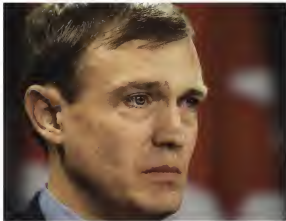
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'I BEGGED TO CONFESS'

William Sampson makes stunning revelations about his rape and torture by the Saudis

TWO YEARS AGO, Canadian *William Sampson* emerged from a prison in Saudi Arabia with a horrific tale of torture at the hands of radical Islamists, who forced him to confess to crimes he didn't commit. Now, in a new book to be published next week, Sampson says the abuse he suffered while in Saudi custody was even more grotesque

and terrifying, then previously reported. In *Confessions of a Tortured Man: Torture and Survival in a Saudi Prison*, Sampson claims, for the first time, that not only was he sexually beaten for months on end, he was also repeatedly raped by his captors. And even in denouncing glances into Saudi justice, the book also serves as a daring indictment of Canadian embassy officials

who, according to Sampson, were ineffective and cowardizing, and often seemed more concerned with placating his captors than ensuring his safety.

Last week, a spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs refused to comment on Sampson's latest statements, saying "it would be improper to

comment on a book that we have not read." Officials with the Saudi Arabian embassy in Ottawa also refused to comment on Sampson's case. In late 2003, Sampson was allowed to detail his complaints before a parliamentary committee. But the book is sure to reignite controversy about whether the government did enough to help a citizen in desperate circumstances abroad.

Sampson's story began in December 2000, when he was arrested in front of his Riyadh home by security officers investigating a rash of car bombings that had left one British citizen dead and several others severely wounded. The Saudis were working on the theory that the bombings were part of a turf war between Western beer drinkers, fighting for control of the illegal alcohol trade.

In fact, the bombings were likely the work of Islamist extremists targeting Westerners. But because Sampson sat friends with some owners of illegal "night clubs" where booze was illegally sold,

Sampson says Canadian officials showed no concern for his safety

he was caught up in the Saudi dragnet.

Sampson had been in the country for more than two years, working as a consultant on water treatment projects for a Saudi development fund. By the time he was switched off the streets and dragged to the interrogation centre across the city, he knew enough about Saudi justice to realize that he was caught in a nightmare. But even he couldn't fathom just how bad it would be.

Much of the book consists of a meticulous reconstruction of inhuman beatings interrupted only by Muslim calls to prayer, and small breaks. Sampson says he was chained up, standing, to his cell door, and prevented from sleeping for days, which led to terrifying hallucinations of giant spiders crawling throughout his cell. He was hung upside down from a metal bar while interrogators whipped the soles of his feet with a bamboo cane or grounded his legs, back, and genitals with an electric shock. Sometimes, he was hog-tied, whipped and kicked. Others, he was pushed in the kidneys, and had his testicles squeezed until he wealed in agony.

Sampson describes a surreal misery-garden in which his senses tortured him, then denied him on the dignity of his crimes, then tried to cage him into confessing. "When he insisted he was innocent, his captors would explode in rage and begin the cycle anew. Finally, after six days with out sleep and in constant pain, Sampson was broken. "I screamed and begged to confess, to tell them what they wanted to hear, but my screams seemed to fall upon deaf ears," Sampson writes. "The beating continued, blows fell across my face, buttocks, and shoulders, an anger how loudly I screamed and my willingness to comply." When the abuse finally stopped, Sampson was told to write out an admission that he planned and detonated the bomb that killed British citizen Christopher Rodney.

He hoped that with this confession, even if it was false, his agony would stop. Though he knew he would almost certainly be sentenced to death by beheading, he was beyond fear—death would be a release from the hell he found himself in. But for Sampson the greatest pain and indignity was just to come. Shortly after he made his first confession, Sampson claims he was dragged to an interrogation room where two Saudi "investigative" raped him. When he lost control of his bowels after the assault, his captors

showed his face into the men and severely beat him yet again. It was "the violation of my last vestige of physical and thus psychological integrity," he writes. "When finally I was lowered to the floor, I was a gibbering, tear-soaked wreck, with no resemblance to what had once been a man." Sampson had written before about physical beatings, but his horrifying account in the book is the first



time he has revealed any sexual abuse while in prison.

Over the next several months,

the torture sessions continued as his captors demanded more and more details to add to his confessions, dragging more innocent men into an implausible plot of revenge and espionage, devised by his tormentors. Finally, he was forced to say he was a British spy willing to destabilize the Saudi regime. Again and again Sampson was dragged into a prison room, bound, beaten and humiliated, back and genitals were a collage of black and purple bruises, then returned to his solitary cell.

During this time Sampson resorted to a series of tiny acts of defiance to make life tolerable. For example, he developed a means

of nesting a few pieces of toilet paper from the laundry he would receive from his captors and song lyrics to himself over and over again. And he maintained a secret "rice diary," consisting of grains of rice hidden in his mattress, to keep track of how many days he was imprisoned, how long he'd gone without sleep, and how many times he was tortured. All these tiny acts were an attempt to maintain sanity, and stave off complete emotional breakdown. As a turned out, the threat of physical breakdown was even more pressing. On the 87th day of his captivity, Sampson suffered a heart attack that required angioplasty surgery to open his clogged arteries. His health emergency provided only a brief respite from the abuse, however. Within a few weeks, he was back sitting up, and back to the regular beatings.

Throughout that time, Sampson hoped Canadian embassy officials might be the advocates and protectors he so desperately needed, but he was sorely disappointed. His first year with Canadian officials came more than a month after his arrest. His tormentors attended the meeting and warned Sampson not to let on he was being ill-treated. He did as he was told. In this meeting and others to follow, Sampson came to distrust the embassy officials, sensing that they believed he was guilty and were interested only in fulfilling their most basic responsibilities. They refused, for example, to accept Sampson's power of attorney and later, when he became delirious and abusive to his captors, they ducked their own culpability. He saw the embassy staff as ineffective, self-serving bureaucrats, not apostles of justice.

Eventually he refused to meet with Canadian officials and the lawyer they had assigned to his case.

Between his arrest and attack and his disillusionment with Canadian diplomats, Sampson came to accept his death as inevitable and he started to openly defy his tormentors. He would physically resist prison guards and ignore their orders. This provoked physical confrontations that left him with several broken teeth and a broken vertebrae, but he kept fighting back. Soon, Sampson was the prisoner from hell. Twice he was taken before a Saudi court, without legal representation, where he refused to accept the judges and denounced Saudi Arabia as a "politically corrupt, socially regressive, morally bankrupt,

Sampson's legal confessions in court, and his release in August 2003

HELL-BENT FOR HOME

Nickelback, writes BRIAN D. JOHNSON, has its roots in a strip club on the prairie

TO GET THERE you drive a two-lane black-top 215 mi. southeast from Calgary, over gentle swells of prairie knotted with hay bales, down through the fabled hills of Drumheller, with its surreal dinosaur statues, then across more slanting plains and big sky, another hour of bare horizon without a ship of civilization, until you reach a sign welcoming you to Hanna, pop. 3,000. "Proud to be the home of Nickelback."

Chad Kroeger, 34, and his sister Tina, 37, have just come off their shifts as housekeepers at Hanna's Best Western. Sitting in Chris's kitchen with her 16-year-old daughter, Dawn, they open beers and reminisce about living one town down from Chad Kroeger, Nickelback's lead singer, back when he had "dark opium hair" and played in a local band called the Village Idiots. The house is framed bawls galley, with hundreds of vinyl LPs stacked on the veneer. A Red Zappelin banner and a beaded curtain serve as the bathroom door. Garden Lights floor plays on the stereo.

It's a warm summer morning with Kroeger in the early '90s. Asked if they were an intro, the answer: "A little bit here and there." They lived off prairie and sour cream, built bonfires in the backyard, and piled mattresses against the walls of the room where the Village Idiots performed, although the neighbors still complained. She talks about the time a bad fire killed a pet dog at Chad's sister's house when he was floating on Fox Lake and bit him in the head. And she wonders what happened to their male cliff jumping video of her and Chad—"It will probably turn up as eBay."

Tina remembers the night Chad came to her rescue on a dark highway. She and a friend drove out to "highway." "But we ran out of gas on our way out to highway," she says. "It's like, two in the morning, we're 18 miles out of town, and we see these headlights coming. It's Chad. He's just trying. He says, 'I know you'd be out here some-

where.'" Then Chris mentions the day Chad decided Frank—her ex and Dawn's dad—for mentoring her when she was playing pool. "Now Frank goes around saying, 'I'm proud I got punched out by Nickelback!'"

The Nickelback boys haven't lived in Hanna since 1995. But when you're a work-

ing-class hero, spinning blue denim into gold, even if you've moved to Vancouver and live on a rock-star paradise of swimming pools and hot tubs, Playboy bunnies and bodyguards, it pays to remember where you come from. And after selling 17 million records, Canada's most successful rock band

has copped in hometown roots for its fourth album, *All the Right Reasons*, which debuted this month at the top of the *Billboard* 200 chart. The first single, *Photograph*, a nostalgic ode to a delinquent youth, is about Hanna. And much of the song's video was shot in that small Prairie town.

A hub for farmers and oil riggers, Hanna is one of those places in the middle of nowhere without a whole lot to do. Drowsy teenagers get stoned and drunk and dream of being rock stars, like their hometown heroes. Not much ever happens in Hanna—until something does. Last week, there was a funeral for a 16-year-old boy, afraid of *Down* David in Grade 11. He put a shotgun to his head after coming home drunk from a Friday

night party. His body was found the next day in a field. Dawn's mother says she herself has lost an friends to suicide over the years. "Well, this is my life," says Dawn.

*Everyone cried and nobody cried
Everyone loved and nobody loved
We'd see the day when nobody died
From all the Right Reasons*

YOU'D EXPECT a band called Nickelback to be from a hard rock mining town like Sudbury. But the name has a less classical blue-collar pedigree: the lead guitarist coined it while working at a Vancouver Starbucks, where coffee cost \$1.95, and he'd always be getting customers a racial back-

Nick no one at the band needs today job, not since the phenomenal breakthrough of their 2000 album *Silver Side Up*, which sold 16 million copies and spawned the ubiquitous hit single, *How You Remind Me*. Only once before had a Canadian band scored a No. 1 hit on both the Canadian and U.S. charts—that was the Guess Who's *American Women*, 35 years ago. And like the Guess Who, Nickelback's four members—singer/guitarist Chad Kroeger, his bassist brother, Mike, guitarist Ryan Adams, and newly recruited drummer Daniel Adair—are another Prairie offspring of meat-and-potatoes roots in a place of business. Earlier this month, a 34-year-old policeman, they chartered a *Wentz* 737 and flew across the country in a promotional blitz, hitting four cities in 24 hours.

But in rock culture where success and wealth are often seen as synonymous, Nickelback is also one of the world's most derided bands. Like Bryan Adams, Shania Twain and Colbie Doolittle, another Canadian artist from Canada that critics, and cooler heads, love to hate, Nickelback has all the trappings of a rock 'n' roll machine shop, punching out generic riffs and earnest lyrics, with none of the post-modern irony or political dissonance that fuel more alternative acts. Imagine a speed-metal *Springsteen* without the tragic coincidence. Chad, the band's earnest, crafts blunt, metaphor-free songs about raw sex, hot cars, rock star dreams and love gone bad. He sings with a soulful scream, straight wood lines that cut through the music with a glaucous sense of purpose.

His lyrics stick to a well-worn macho formula. On the previous album, Kroeger sings, "I like your pants around your feet / And I like the dirt that's on your knees / And I like the way you and my plane / When you're looking up at me." On the new album, there's a baroque rocker called *Animals*, in which he's getting old and while driving hell-bore down the highway ("I'll find a good habitat drive into the ditch"), or *Next Constant*, he's itching to beat up the next guy who lays on his girl before she finishes her shift in a bar ("They think they'll get inside her with every drink they buy her"). And in *Follow You Home*, he swears he'll stick a girl to the ends of the earth—"Cause you're my Mississippi Princess / You're my California Queen / Take the Queen of Detroit / And every city in between."

With chicks as tall as Kansas corn, we're



The Kroegers (Dawn, Chris and Tina) are devoted to the band (Kroeger, center)



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BACKTALK



Music | A war-weary rapper with more street cred than 50 Cent

Kanye West is posing for photos in a downtown Toronto park when a slight, silver-haired grandmother interrupts. "Who are you?" she asks. The soft-spoken rapper offers her name, prompting the woman—easily in her mid-70s—to scratch up her nose. Not, as you're not K-O-S? she says, referring to Canada's best-known hip-hop artist, who (she goes on to say) he first saw) keeps on with laughter—again due to an old white woman's knowledge of urban music, but also because K-O-S is his childhood rival.

Last year, the two rappers joined lyrically that is—after it was rumored that K-O-S had been in a fight with Kanye in a power for Kanye's video album *Alfred*. It was a strange reason for pick-

ing a fight, considering that Kanye grew up in Somalia, one of the most dangerous countries on Earth (not even 50 Cent, with his own battle wounds, has that kind of street cred).

Kanye, now 35, escaped the war-ravaged nation in 1990, when his mother secured visas for her family and plane tickets for the last commercial flight out of Mogadishu. They landed first in New York City, before relocating to the Westborough of Riverside five months later. "I still think in Somalia," says the ultra-hip-hop rapper, who's wearing a vintage sports jacket. "Being a Somali is still what defines my values."

This summer, after releasing his solo debut CD, *The Starz*, Kanye gained some mainstream

Kanye made a name for himself in *Live 8* and is a regular at the UN



With the *West* album, Kanye is proving himself as a serious artist

www.rockstar.com
Kanye West

attention when he was added to *Live 8*'s Live 8 and was added. He's also regularly called on by the United Nations, and last week flew to Johannesburg to participate in a UN conference about Africa and children affected by war. On 2005, he performed a spoken word piece in Geneva at the 58th anniversary of the UN's refugee convention.

On his latest disc, Kanye's voice sounds a lot like *Live 8*, but lyrically he's unlike any other North American hip-hop star. While most rappers spit about drug life in the urban jungle and all the girls they've slept with, Kanye can use the opportunity to make bold political statements—and he does it without disowned-credentialed chains hanging around his neck. "Music is born out of struggle," he says. "It's about the struggle. It comes from having a different frame of reference."

He's never been back to Somalia since his family's escape, but he still longs for some aspects of his homeland. "I really miss the heightened poetry that is just a part of normal conversations," says Kanye, who was rapping English songs on the dirty streets of Mogadishu years before he knew what the words meant. "The Somali language is almost Shakespearean. My mother is a fierce poet, and my grandmothers were one of the most renowned poets to ever come out of Somalia."

When discussing the spike in shooting deaths this year in Toronto, Kanye identifies another key difference between the two countries. "In Somalia, ours are connected to violence," he says. "The kids who don't have to carry guns were the coolest."

Kanye considers himself a voice for the oppressed and is energized by a very painful childhood memory that he thinks about every night before climbing on stage. "Somalia had suffered from famine and a fire had been set for the market near my house," he says. "Everything, as far as my eyes could see, was in fire. It looked like the end of the world—and it was in an 11-year-old. I made a commitment then that if I escaped, I'd look to find positive ways of changing things. That's what drives me." JOHN HENRY

Books | Pretty maids hanging in a row

There's never any shortage of things to talk about with Margaret Atwood. She may have cut down on drinking (no Prosecco—her dry, open-minded and instantly likable first novel, *Making a Man of the Marquess*, is from the perspective of the oh-so-dutiful wife of Hamlet's hero, but she's just as happy to talk about the first historical fiction on the Black Death, "generously" Marking-Gloves version, not the biblical plagues, or at all," she says,



series of suspenseful and novel will feature disease-ridden humans from hell.

As for *The Penelopiad*, it's part of a project: two dozen international writers retelling a myth of their choosing. Alwood read *The Odyssey* as a young teen and had always been disturbed by the 12 maidens hanged with a ship's rope, after he finished killing the 200 sailors for Penelope, who had waited for his husband during his absence. Scholars have puzzled over this act of femininity by the popular hero, but Alwood's imagination varies after a somewhat explosive, not-so-very-puritanical forays: "the willing, the everybody else, to let him off for killing the sailors, but not the girls." BRIAN KITTNER



Film | Steve Martin shops upscale for love

shopper could have gone wrong in so many ways—a May-September romance about a rich businessman who plays sugar daddy to an impressionable young sales clerk. But in adapting the script from his own deft novella, *Slave Material* has struck just the right tone. And British director Asmael Tischer (Glory and Jackie) matches it with assurance, wit, and visual elegance.

In a more dramatic lead role, Wilson seems to be virtually playing himself as Ray, a dapper computer executive with a self-deprecating wit who discovers Maxwell (Clay)

PARASOL, an aspiring artist, selling gloves at Saks Fifth Avenue in Los Angeles, as Roy ventures off their last week-long gallery and expression-bashes, she rebuffs the clumsy advances of a more age-appropriate tutor (Jason Schwartzman). The movie strikes a fine balance: Martin is the cool intelligence behind the crop, but with a sensitive edge that ties to his character; he lets the story unfold from the woman's point of view. Camm carries the film, and shows extraordinary, in the end, the delicate sadness of the romance is not about age or class, but about a woman's desire to commit. As Meerfeld says: "How is it possible to stay a woman he kept at a distance so that when she was gone he would miss her?" **BRIAN B. JOHNSON**



Zadie Smith finishes John Intini's sentences

Having written three bestsellers, Zula Smith, who just turned 30, is already a literary heavyweight. In her latest, *Obsessive*, she focuses on a pair of feuding families—like a modern-day *Reveries*.

THE SOUBRIST FRIEND ABOUT ME — I was
my warbling.

[illegible]

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Books | Witches
under every bed

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Best Sellers

Fiction

3. A BIRD OF FEATHERS (see <i>Quagmire</i>) (C)	2
4. A BURNING OF BOMBS AND WOMEN , Gena Rowlands (C)	3
5. BATHING & GARDENS , John Lennon (D)	3
6. BEHOLDING THE ETERNAL (see <i>Harold</i>) (C)	5
7. THE END OF THE LINE , Eric Clapton & J.G.	2
8. AN ELEGANT (see <i>Swain</i>) (D)	4
9. LOVE , Eric Clapton (C)	4
10. LOVE (see <i>Swain</i>) (see <i>Swain</i>) (C)	5
11. THE WINDMILL (see <i>John Lennon</i>) (D)	5
12. WINDMILL (see <i>John Lennon</i>) (D)	5

Non-fiction

5. FLAUNCEMAGNUS , The Story of Jack and William C. Swanwick (2)	6
6. THE DAYS OF FLAUNCE MAGNUS , Introduction (2)	7
7. GREENWATER , Introduction (2)	2
8. THE WORK OF MARGARET , Introduction (2)	1
9. THE SECRET MARGARET TAVEL , From A. Freeman (2)	1
10. NEW FISH , Introduction (2)	8
11. SHOOTING , Introduction (2)	8
12. THE WORLD OF FLAUNCE , Introduction (2)	3
13. A GLASS IN THE HAND OF THE WORLD , Introduction (2)	5

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GETTING BETTER WITH AGE

Ever notice how much smarter Bouchard and others are—after politics?

I **HAVE DECIDED** all politicians should retire immediately. Not because they are unpleasant or have essentially no other skills. Rather, all politicians should quit because politicians almost always make more sense after they leave office than they did before. Last week's best example was Jacques Bouchard.

Of course the former Quebec premier is seriously brilliant. But you'd be hard pressed to name three things he got done when he finally loaded the big job. He tried a lot to blunt criticism for the rather inept nature of his tenure as the premier's chair, mostly Jean Charest.

Jean Charest, or Jean Q. Public:

But suddenly last week, out came Bouchard—along with a handful of other government Quebecers—to offer an initiative diagnosed the province's problems, and serious changes to help fix them. The whole document was like a list of things Bouchard had never dared admit before.

Even though Quebec has "succeeded remarkably in catching up with the rest of Canada over the past half-century," the Quebec government "is like a healthy elephant that is unable to take flight," Bouchard and his cohorts wrote. "We must avoid blaming others for our own problems."

Are Quebec's problems all caused by the fact it's actual so need enough tax dollars to the province? Is he alone that "in to dream in technocracy or to be naive as an entrepreneur?" Really? Now he tells us: How about speeding from Canada? "Whatever choice Quebec makes, the challenges facing it remain the same."

Those challenges, the Bouchard gang argues in an echo of Paul Martin's recent speeches, are demographic decline at home and the rise of a competitive Asia abroad. The firm remedy: pay down public debt. How? Increase hydro rates and put the extra revenue straight to the debt. Then what? "Freeed from part of the burden of debt, the Quebec government could take action in an area that is essential to a prosperous future: innovative investments in education and training."

Not even the issue can foot all of the bill



for a first-rate knowledge economy. Who else can chip in? Such jobs. Time for an end to Quebec's university tuition freeze, "a policy that thus in the face of common sense." And since the knowledge economy is global and increasingly borderless, "the government must also make for greater efforts to ensure that all Quebecers speak and write English, as well as a third language."

Here, at last, is a real program for change. To be precise, it's Jean Charest's program. But apparently we can't expect Charest to get serious about implementation and he writes:

Each of us can write his own list of policies who go wrong when they get out. Rob Reid, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton. Perhaps the classic modern case of a guy whose mind cleared as soon as he saw the list done was Frank McKenna. In 1997, four days before he retired after a decade as New Brunswick's premier, McKenna gave a speech full of the sort of stuff everyone knows but nobody

notes for: "Dependency—unemployment insurance, welfare cheques, transfer payments—have all become a narcotic to us to which we have become addicted."

These days, one hour, McKenna wants to come back into electoral politics as leader of the federal Liberals. Fun question: would he deliver the same speech today?

Talk because I live in Ottawa, a city full of politicians who haven't retired yet. And these days the universe of the possible in that town seems to have shrunk to the size of a thumbtack.

Paul Martin actually gave a big speech that identified the challenges Bouchard named. How's he doing on that one? The critics are saying: Martha Piper, president of the University of British Columbia "We're marking time." Anne Golden, president of the Conference Board of Canada "Snoozing." Don Drummond, chief economist at Toronto-Dominion Bank "Every single thing [they're] doing is productivity-unfriendly."

Anyone got a better idea? Well, we've pretty firmly established that the Conservatives are angry at David Duggan. There's a plan. The NDP showed genuine signs of life in May, but it's been awhile. We've spent more time debating chewing-gum expenses lately than we have debating the challenges every retired politician in Canada could name.

If they all retired, perspectives might lighten and ambition serve as a catalyst to hide projects and baby steps. Or here's an intermediate step: maybe our politicians could think, a bit more often, about the things they'll wish they'd done when they do retire. Tony Blair said something oddly touching at a Labour conference last month: "Every time I've ever introduced a reform in government I wish, in retrospect, I had gone further." And he's Tony Blair. Imagine the regret this lot will suffer.

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